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ABSTRACT

Designed for use by parents of preschoolers participating in the Bringing Out Head Start Talents (BOHST) project, nine booklets present home activities intended to fit into the parent's and child's normal routines. Each booklet addresses a separate talent area: intellectual, creativity, leadership, art, music, reading, math, science, and psychomotor talents. An introduction describes the meaning of the particular talent and how the parent can help develop it, followed by six specific activities and concluding with three sections which list ways to make the most of the child's talent, places to go to spark the child's interest, and questions to ask that focus on the particular event. (JW)

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[Talent Activities for the Home]

BOHST

Bringing Out Head Start Talents

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BOHST
Bringing Out Head Start Talents

Intellectual Talent Activities for the Home

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Handicapped and Talented
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

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ABOUT THESE ACTIVITIES

These activities were created for the BOHST (Bringing Out Head Start Talents) Project at the University of Illinois. They focus on one of nine talent areas which are being used with children in the Head Start Program your child attends.

Chances are that if you have been given these activities, your child has been identified in the intellectual talent area. As you know, this is very good news. Using information from you child's teacher and from the interview with you, the Head Start staff along with a BOHST trainer have selected your child as having potential to excel in the intellectual area. While your child may have other talents also, intellectaul seems to be an area of exceptional strength right now.

These activities resemble the ones you received in detective, inventor and judge thinking in that they are informal and are designed to fit into your busy schedule. However, these activities are different in that they focus on one particular talent area and have only been sent to parents whose children have been identified in this area.

You can do most of these activities during your normal routine--for instance when you are bathing your child, putting her to bed, going somewhere with him, or sitting around the dinner table. Each activity may be used over and over again, as long as it is enjoyable for you and your child. You may change any of the activities to make them more useful, interesting, or suited to your child.

Having a talent is just a beginning. With help from parents and teachers, a talent can grow into a set of skills, and a child may develop into a creative and productive adult. The preschool years are critical to a child's development, and activities such as these can help your child become a productive and talented adult.

ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S INTELLECTUAL TALENT

What to Expect

Having intellectual talent means having the ability to learn easily, quickly, and independently. You can see this talent demonstrated by your child through many different skills and abilities. Your child may have a very good memory. She or he can remember events and details that you've forgotten. Perhaps your child is very observant. She or he notices small details in rooms, in books, and even in people's moods.

Your child may seem to know a lot for his or her age. Your child may understand difficult or complicated ideas. Maybe your child is a good problem solver. She or he'll work hard at figuring something out, like how to make something work or why something happened. Your child may talk easily and use complicated words to explain things, to tell a story, or to ask a question. These are some examples which describe a child with intellectual talent.

What to Do

You can help develop your child's talent in many ways. You help when you push your child to think and find out things for him or herself - through asking your child questions; encouraging experiments; or suggesting outside resources like books, magazines and other people. You help when you talk to your child and ask his or her opinions about things such as house rules, meals, family trips, as well as about more serious concerns like death, love, war, prejudice. You help when you give your child problems to solve. These can be day-to-day problems or game-like problems such as mysteries, riddles, and treasure hunts. You help when you give your child a variety of ways to find out about people, places, and things - by reading books and magazines, meeting people, taking trips, walking through the neighborhood, or going to museums.

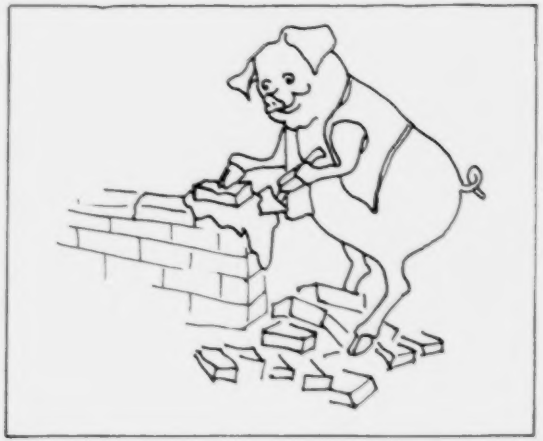
What Does it Mean?

By doing these things and using the activities in this manual you'll strengthen your child's intellectual talent. You'll also help your child feel more comfortable with this talent. Intellectual talent will benefit your child throughout his or her lifetime. If properly nurtured, your child will be able to think for him or herself, produce new ideas, and find solutions to problems.

TLLLING TALES

telling a story from a character's point of view-

Intellectual Activity



"While I was working hard laying these bricks, my brothers were off dancing."

Read a familiar story to your child at bedtime. Then ask your child to retell the story as if she/he were one of the characters.

For example, as one of the pigs in The Three Little Pigs, your child might begin, *It's time for me to leave home and build my own house. I think I'll make it out of bricks...*

After reading Little Red Riding Hood, your child might retell the story from the grandmother's point of view, *I've been sick in bed for two whole weeks waiting for my granddaughter to bring me some goodies...*

At another time have your child retell the same story from a different character's point of view.

FIGURE IT OUT!
-solving playtime problems-

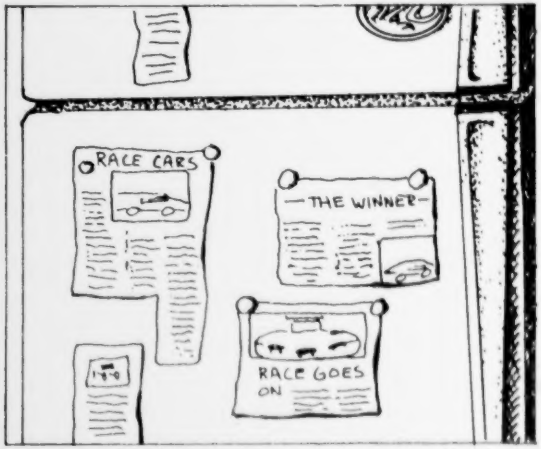
How could we fix it?

Intellectual
Activity

Your child will often come across little upsets during his or her playtime. Although these problems might seem small to you, they will be important to your child. Following are some examples and suggestions on how to handle them.

- If a toy doesn't work properly, ask your child to diagnose the problem (although you might have to make the actual adjustments).
- If something breaks on one of your child's toys, ask your child for solutions on fixing it.
- If a play accessory (tool, weapon, piece of clothing, game part) is missing or unavailable, ask your child to find something to substitute for it.

NEWS REPORT
-collecting news stories and pictures-



What else can you find out about car racing?

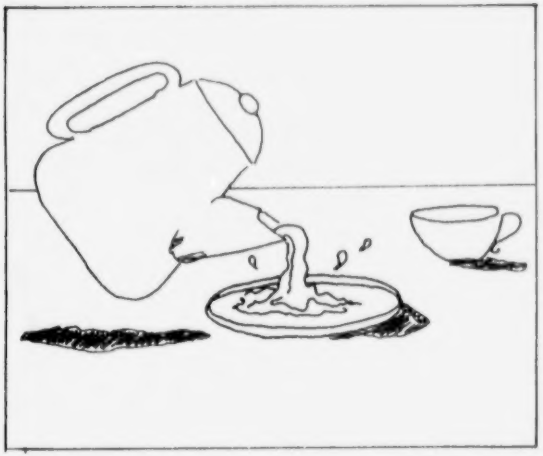
Intellectual
Activity

Be alert to news events that might be interesting to your child. Examples are rocket launches, weather (snowstorms, rains, etc.), and sports. Let your child learn about these by watching televised news reports, listening to reports on the radio, and finding pictures and articles in newspapers or magazines.

Help your child make his or her own book on a subject by combining cut-out pictures, drawings inspired by news reports, and stories written (or dictated) by him or her.

Hint: You can also use a bulletin board or tape news items to the refrigerator.

THAT'S SILLY!
-doing silly things-



What should I pour the coffee into? Why?

Intellectual
Activity

Next time you're in the kitchen with your child, try doing something wrong or silly when your child is watching. He or she will probably delight in pointing out your mistakes.

Here are some possible slip-ups:

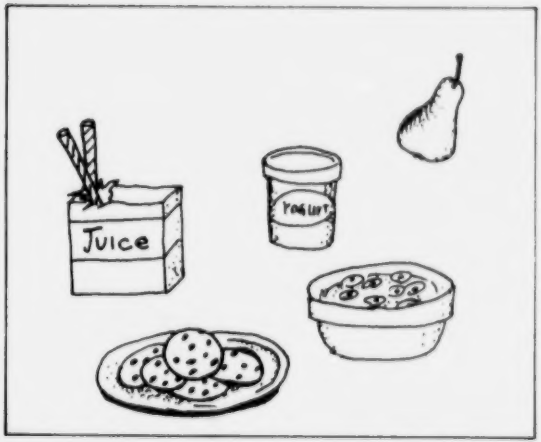
- pour juice into a bowl instead of a glass
- give your child a fork to eat pudding with
- put on your coat before you sit down to eat lunch
- put a pan on a stove burner that's turned off and complain to your child that the food is not cooking fast enough

You can probably think of many more silly antics yourself.

Be sure your child tells you not only what's wrong, but also how to do it right!

Try doing silly things in other rooms, too.

ZEROING IN
-guessing from clues-



It's not crunchy...
It's not something to drink...

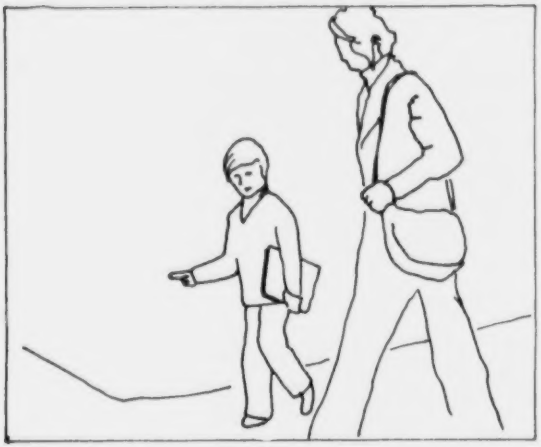
Intellectual
Activity

This activity can help your child see differences between things. Set out several snack foods, like a cracker, an orange, a cookie, and some celery. Say, *We're going to have a snack. I want you to choose one of these foods without telling me which one. Then give me clues that tell me what it is not until I've narrowed it down to the snack you picked.*

After your child gives you each clue, remove the foods that are not it. For example, if your child says, *It's not round*, you can take away any foods that are round like the orange and maybe the cookie. Continue this way until you correctly identify the snack your child chose.

Hint: To help your child learn how to do this activity, take the first turn yourself. Give clues that tell what "it's not" and let your child narrow down the choices to the correct one.

A SENSE OF DIRECTION
-learning the way home-



Do you know which way we turn at the next corner?

Intellectual
Activity

Take a walk with your child. Go to a nearby park, store, or friend's house. When it's time to return home, ask your child to lead the way.

On another day, ask your child to guide the two of you on the way there, as well as on the way home.

Encourage your child to become familiar with street names and landmarks in your area. Then try having your child direct you when you are driving somewhere, using street names whenever he or she can. (You might want to tell your child on the way to your destination that she or he will be directing you home.)

Things to do

-to make the most of your child's intellectual talent-

- Encourage your child to find out about things he or she is curious about by looking in books, talking to people, exploring, or trying experiments.
- Allow your child to do things by himself or herself to encourage independence.
- Seriously talk to your child often. Answer his or her questions and ask your child's opinion about things.
- Let your child keep a word file or scrapbook of words he or she knows. Allow your child to cut any words that he or she has learned to read from fliers, magazines, newspapers, etc., and put them in the file or paste in the scrapbook.
- Read stories to your child that have a moral then talk about their meaning. Some books with a moral include Aesop's Fables, Serpendipity books, and most fairy tales.
- Do things with your child at home - make something to eat, build a block house, play games like Old Maid, Go Fish, Lotto, or strategy games like Parcheesi or checkers.
- Provide opportunities for grouping objects. (For example: sorting the groceries into those which go into the refrigerator and those which go in the cupboard - dividing the laundry into pants, socks, and shirts - putting all the yellow things in the drawer.
- Have your child make up a story to a wordless picture book or make up a new version of a story using just the pictures.
- Use lots of different things to practice counting, adding, and subtracting with your child. (For example: pennies, french fries, toys, windows, rocks, buttons, silverware, etc.)
- Set up a small area in the house where your child can work on projects of interest.

Places to go

-to spark your child's interest in intellectual area-

- Let your child plan an outing for the two of you. Help him or her to prepare for it by asking questions such as, "What do we need to take?", "How are we going to get there?", "What are we going to do when we get there?"

- Over to a friend's house, whether old or young, to talk about or do things that interest both of them

- Check out books that interest your child and puzzles from the library.

- Visit different places where people work to see what goes on there - fire station, post office, construction site, florist, pet store, city dump, police station, bakery, newspaper office.

- Go to concerts in the park, museums, circus plays or dance recitals whenever possible.

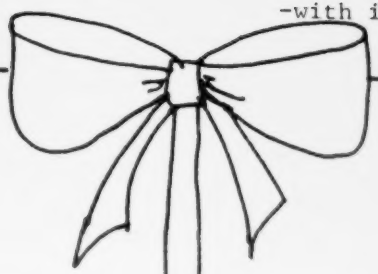
Questions to ask

-that focus on intellectual talent-

- What is missing from this picture, group of objects, table?
- What is the problem? What caused it? How can we make it better?
- How many different ways could you do this?
- What is the opposite of day, stop, walk, up, in, etc.?
- Which of these things belong together? Now can you sort them out a different way?
- What are all the ways we use this?
- What would happen if..(dogs were bigger than cars, everything was purple, people had no feet, animals could talk?)
- Can you guess what will happen next? Why?
- What do you think about this?
- Which is your favorite? Why?

Gifts to give

-with intellectual talent in mind-



- Books of fairy tales, poems, riddles, simple science experiments, etc.
- Puzzles (as your child gets better at them, get puzzles with more and more pieces)
- All kinds of art supplies like scissors, crayons, paper, markers, glue, tape, paste, ribbon or yarn scraps
- Children's games - card games (Old Maid, Go Fish), board games (Candyland, checkers)
- Science equipment - magnifying glass, magnet, collecting boxes

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ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S CREATIVE TALENT

What to Expect

Having creative talent means having a combination of imagination, experimentation, and sensitivity. You may see your child's creative talent in some of the following ways.

When your child draws, dances or tells stories, his or her ideas may seem very imaginative or unusual. Maybe you've often thought your child was a bit of a rebel, an independent person who does things just a little bit differently. Perhaps your child has a good sense of humor, even acting very silly at times.

Your child may be able to come up with many different ideas about a single issue or problem. You might ask your child for one suggestion on how to do something and she or he will give your five. Your child may put a lot of feeling into a dance, a painting, a story, or a song. These descriptions are only some of the things you can expect from a child with special creative talent.

What to Do

You can encourage your child's creative talent in many ways. You help when you ask your child to use his or her imagination to make up a story, a dance, a song. You also help when you ask your child to think up a new or original idea - maybe a new way to solve a problem or an original gift idea. You help when you ask your child to think up lots of ways to do something - many ways to finish a story, many ways to help a friend, or many names for a pet. When you ask your child to tell about a feeling in a song, in a drawing or in words, you help him or her to become more sensitive.

What Does it Mean?

These examples and the activities in this manual are ways to help develop creative talent. By helping your child develop creative talent you'll help him or her lead a more satisfying life. Your child will be more sensitive to situations and she or he will be able to find creative solutions to problems.

WHAT A CHARACTER!
-creating a new character using props-

I'll try to guess who you are.

Creative Activity

Give your child a chance to become someone else. Pull out some of the following for dress-up clothes:

scarf	tie	dress
hat	skirt	sunglasses
vest	jacket	coat
wig	shoes	jewelry

Tell your child to put on some dress-up clothes a become someone else. *Walk, talk and act as if you were that person. I'll guess who you are.*

Hint: Talk to your child as if he or she were this new character. Ask your child lots of questions about what their character is like.

FANTASY FLIGHTS
-telling an imaginative story-

What are they going to do with all those marbles?

Ask your child to do some imagining while you're driving in the car together. Help your child make up a story. For instance, say to your child,

Pretend you are the engineer of a huge freight train. What are we carrying? Where are we going?

Another time,

Pretend you are the pilot of a jet plane carrying lots of passengers. Where are we going? What do you have to do to fly this plane?

Another time,

Pretend you are steering a boat down a wide river. Who is with us? What is happening?

Encourage your child to add more detail to the story by asking more questions like, *Why are we going there?* or *What will we see along the way?* or *How will we get back?*

FOOD FORMS

-thinking of many ways a food is eaten-

Creative Activity

What are all the forms we eat/drink milk in?

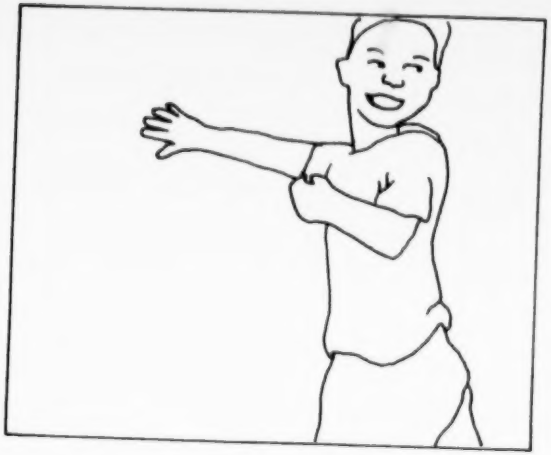
Next time you're grocery shopping, play a food game with your child. Suggest a food. Ask your child to think of as many forms of that food as she/he can. Say to your child, *What are all the ways you eat or drink milk? Think of as many foods as you can.* Then ask your child to think of all the ways we eat potatoes, chicken, apples, etc.

As you're walking through the store, see if your child sees some food forms she or he left out.

Hint: You may need to give hints for foods that are less familiar.

EMOTIONAL PERFORMANCES
-expressing emotions in different ways-

Creative
Activity



I'll try to guess what emotion you're feeling.

Talk about the variety of emotions we have - joy, fear, anger, pride, loneliness, worry, etc. Then see how well your child can communicate an emotion without using words. You guess what emotion is being acted out.

- Ask your child to pick an emotion and pantomime it or act it out silently.
- Have your child pick another emotion, this time expressing it in a dance. Again, guess what it is.
- Ask your child to show a third emotion by singing while you try to guess.

Try switching roles with your child. See how well she or he can guess what emotion you're communicating through your actions.

SUBSTITUTES
-determining items that could be used instead-

What else could I use to hold flowers?

Creative Activity

Encourage your child to create some new uses for familiar things. While you are cooking in the kitchen ask your child,

"What if we didn't have a measuring cup? What else could we use to measure with?"

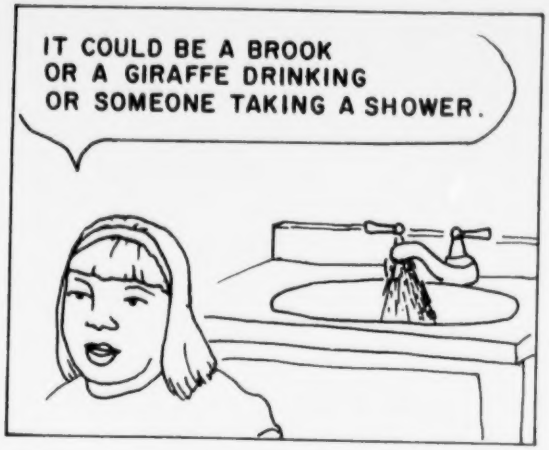
or *"What if we didn't have spoons? What else could we eat with?"*

or *"What if we didn't have a rolling pin? What else could we use to roll out our cookie dough?"*

Ask your child to think of as many different ideas as she or he can.

Challenge your child to think of substitutes for things in other areas of the house as well. Like, *"If you only had one mitten, what else could you use to keep your hands warm?"* or *"What would be a good substitute for a shoestring?"*

SOUND-MAKERS
-possible sources of a sound-



What are all the things that might make that sound?

Creative Activity

When you are working in the kitchen and making some interesting sounds, ask your child to do some imagining. Have your child sit with his or her back to you while you make a kitchen sound,

-using a mixer
-chopping or peeling vegetables
-setting a timer
-running a blender
-stirring
-pouring water.

Say to your child, *"Listen to this sound. Think of all the things you can that might make that sound. Really use your imagination and come up with as many ideas as you can."*

Hint: Try playing this sound guessing game in other parts of the house too.

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS
-brainstorming possible solutions to
a family problem-

What are some ways to solve this problem?

Pick a mealtime when family members are present to discuss a family problem or conflict. Ask your child to come up with as many possible solutions as she/he can. Household problems mig include people arguing over TV programs, people getting up late for school or work, a pet messin up the house, family members not doing their house chores, etc.

Encourage your child and other family members to think up some original ways to tackle the proble Then try out one of your child's solutions.

Hint: One way to encourage originality is to let everyone think up as many solutions as possible. Write down everyone's ideas, even the silly ones.

Things to do

-to make the most of your child's creative talent-

- Be humorous and encourage your child to see humor in things.
- Encourage your child to create his or her own greeting cards to send to friends or relatives for birthdays, holidays, or other special occasions.
- Display your child's creative work in a place where people can see it and admire it. Change the display periodically.
- Allow lots of time for daydreaming and quiet thinking.
- Read or tell stories to your child, but leave off the ending and ask your child to finish it in a new or different way.
- Collect all kinds of materials for an art supply box and keep it handy for your child to use. Into it you might put blunt-end scissors; glue, tape or paste; paper scraps; yarn, ribbon or clothes pieces; cardboard tubes; small boxes; odd buttons; found materials, like leaves, sticks or rocks; anything you and your child think is interesting.
- Start a dress-up box with your child and into it put a variety of old clothes, jewelry, hats, gloves, shoes.
- When small problems arise, ask your child to think of all the possible ways they could be solved, including unrealistic or silly solutions.
- See how many ways your child thinks of to accomplish a small task, eg. to transport a toy across the room, to climb a jungle gym.
- Set aside a small area (a little table in the corner of a room or a smooth board propped up by boxes, etc.) where your child can work frequently on his or her art creations.
- Instead of having your child <u>tell</u> you a message, ask him or her to think of a way to communicate it without using words.
- Let your child try out new ways of doing routine tasks.
- Praise your child's efforts instead of the finished product; never make fun of your child's creative attempts.

Places to go

-to help your child's creative talent grow-

- Plays, mime, or dance performances at school or at the theater.
- Puppet shows (your local library or park district often has these)
- Craft shows or exhibits
- To the library to check out books such as fairy tales, fables, wordless books, children's records, etc.
- Any place that would be new to your child and thus widen his or her experiences.
- Let the child plan an outing to wherever he or she wants to go.

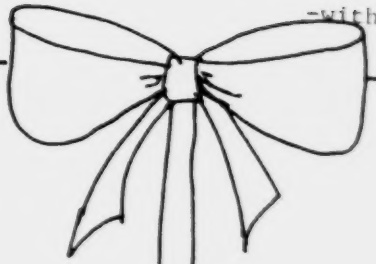
Questions to ask

-that focus on creative talent-

- What are all the things you make with this?
- Can you help me solve this problem?
- What can we do today?
- If you could get anything you asked for, what would you ask for and why?
- What's another way you could do this?
- Can you show me how this animal would move? How would this animal move in space?

Gifts to give

-with creative talent in mind-



- Books of fairy tales
- Animal stories that stimulate the imagination
- All sorts of art supplies - scissors, crayons, markers, chalk, paints, modeling clay, etc. - and lots of blank paper.
- Building toys like blocks, legos, lincoln logs
- Props for costumes - mustaches, glitter, glasses, funny hats
- Blank tapes
- A roll of film that your child could use in your camera
- Enrollment in a children's art class or dance class

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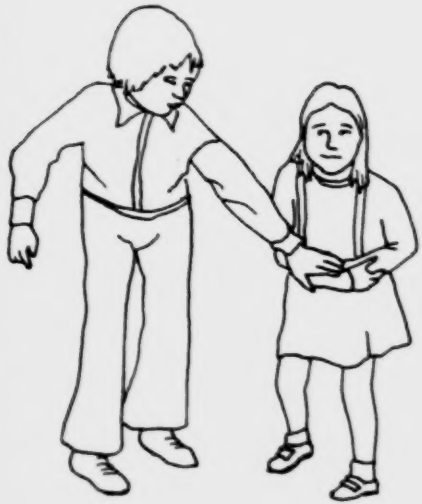
BOHST
Bringing Out Head Start Talents



Leadership Talent Activities for the Home

Dr. Merle B. Karnes, Director
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Urbana-Champaign, Illinois 61801
1984-1985

Activities written/adapted by: Linda Berg, Margaret Patten
Supplemental materials written by: Katie Hercik, Pam Patton
Art work by: Moon Vanko, Heidi Zeller
Organized and edited by: Jane Amundsen, Tsivia Cohen

Some materials adapted from: RAPYHT Project
Retreival and Acceleration of Promising Young Handicapped and Talented
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

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ABOUT THESE ACTIVITIES

These activities were created for the BOHST (Bringing Out Head Start Talents) Project at the University of Illinois. They focus on one of nine talent areas which are being used with children in the Head Start Program your child attends.

Chances are that if you have been given these activities, your child has been identified in the leadership talent area. As you know, this is very good news. Using information from your child's teacher and from the interview with you, the Head Start staff along with a BOHST trainer have selected your child as having potential to excel in the leadership area. While your child may have other talents also, leadership seems to be an area of exceptional strength right now.

These activities resemble the ones you received in detective, inventor and judge thinking in that they are informal and are designed to fit into your busy schedule. However, these activities are different in that they focus on one particular talent area and have only been sent to parents whose children have been identified in this area.

You can do most of these activities during your normal routine--for instance when you are bathing your child, putting her to bed, going somewhere with him, or sitting around the dinner table. Each activity may be used over and over again, as long as it is enjoyable for you and your child. You may change any of the activities to make them more useful, interesting, or suited to your child.

Having a talent is just a beginning. With help from parents and teachers, a talent can grow into a set of skills, and a child may develop into a creative and productive adult. The preschool years are critical to a child's development, and activities such as these can help your child become a productive and talented adult.

ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S LEADERSHIP TALENT

What to Expect

Leadership talent is a combination of many skills. The two most important skills are getting along well with people and getting a job done. You can see signs of your child's leadership talent in many different ways. Maybe your child makes up group games, telling others what to do, when and where. Maybe you've seen other children asking your child how to do or make something. Your child may be the one who volunteers to get up in front of a group to tell a joke, to sing a song or to do a dance.

Maybe your child acts as a "peacemaker" by helping others settle their problems or your child may often think about the feelings of others, giving comfort when others feel hurt or sad. Your child may be one who reminds others about rules for safety and behavior when you're riding on a bus, visiting the library, or walking down a busy street. Each of these abilities are signs of your child's talent in leadership.

What to Do

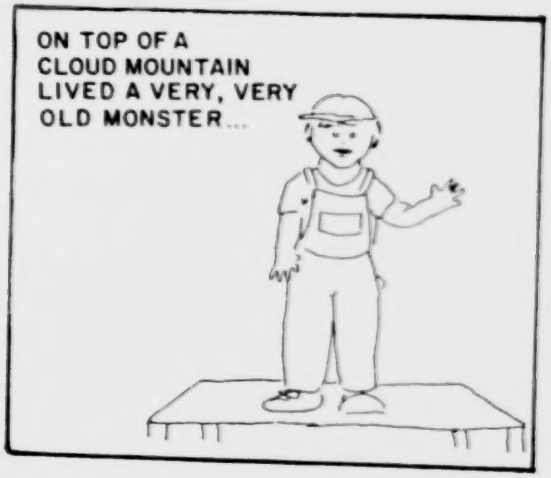
You can help your child's leadership talent in many ways. You help when you give your child projects to do like making a present for someone, cleaning up the yard, or being responsible for taking care of a pet. You help when you ask your child for ways to solve a problem. You help when you show your child how to consider the feelings of others - "How can your sister help?" or "What would make Joey feel better?" When you give your child chances to perform for others - by telling a story, putting on a puppet show, playing an instrument - you are encouraging his or her leadership talent.

What Does it Mean?

These examples and the activities in this manual give your child many chances to practice leadership skills. By helping your child's leadership talent grow, you will help him or her be more successful in life. Your child will have the skills to develop strong ties with people and have the self-confidence to meet challenges and to take risks.

LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU
-stage a performance for a family member-

Leadership
Activity



Now presenting "The storyteller!"

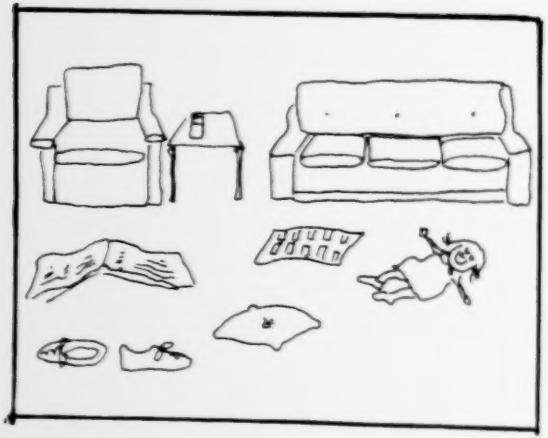
When you and your child want to liven up a rainy day, ask your child to plan a performance for you. Your child's talents may include any of the following:

- singing
- dancing
- telling jokes
- doing magic tricks
- playing an instrument
- pantomiming
- telling a story
- gymnastics

Tell your child to plan the performance and to let you know when he or she's ready. Then sit back and enjoy the show!

Hint: Help your child organize any props and plan the performance. You may want to help your child write a program for the event.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER
-work with another to get a job done-



How shall we divide the job?

Leadership Activity

When there's work to be done around the house give your child a job to do with someone else...another family member, a friend, or neighbor.

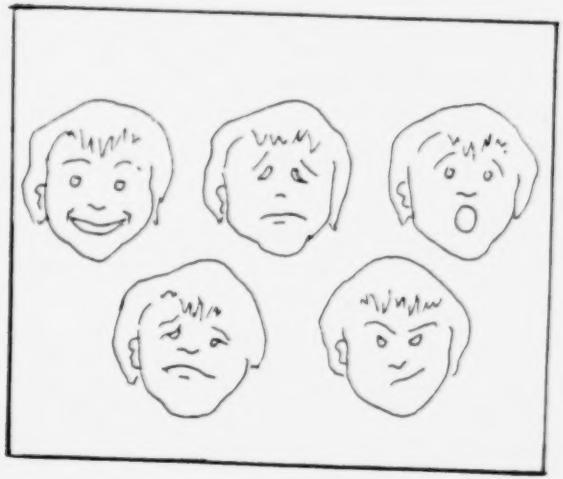
Some possible house chores are:

- straightening up a bedroom
- setting the table for a meal
- caring for a pet
- cleaning up the yard
- a simple cooking project

Afterwards, ask them, *How well did you work together? How did you decide who should do what? Was the work fairly divided?*

Hint: The partners may decide on an arrangement that looks unfair but is agreeable to both of them.

EXPRESSING FEELINGS
-sharing "emotional" experiences-



How did that make you feel?

Leadership
Activity

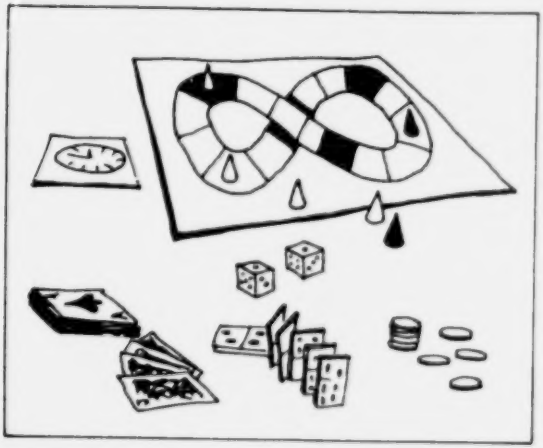
At bedtime, when you have the day behind you, share situations with your child that brought out a strong feeling in you. You might say, *Today I felt happy when...*or *Today I got really mad because...*

Then ask your child to tell you about a strong feeling she or he had that day. Ask your child, *What made you feel that way?...What did you do afterwards?*

If your child doesn't have a personal experience to share, ask your child to tell you about someone she or he was with who had a strong feeling. *What made them feel that way? What did they do about it?*

Hint: Let your child know that all feelings are okay, even negative ones.

SHOW ME HOW
-teaching a game to someone else-



Here's how to play this game.

Leadership
Activity

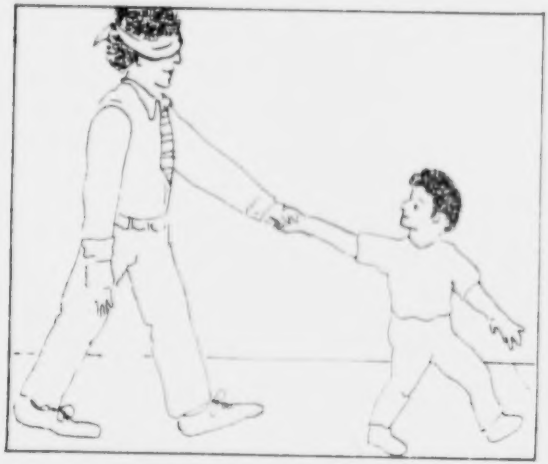
When you have time at home to do something special, give your child a chance to be a teacher. Ask your child to teach you a game that he or she knows or to make up a game to teach you.

The game could be a card game, music game, outdoor game, fingerplay, or song, etc. Remember, the game should be one you don't already know.

As you're playing, tell your child which directions are clear to you. Ask for an explanation of any directions which you don't understand.

Hint: The game may be very simple and non-competitive.

DIRECT ME
-guiding a "blind" person-



Tell me which way to go.

Leadership Activity

Give your child a chance to guide you on a walk outdoors. Put on a blindfold (or simply close your eyes). Tell your child that she or he must be your eyes since you cannot see.

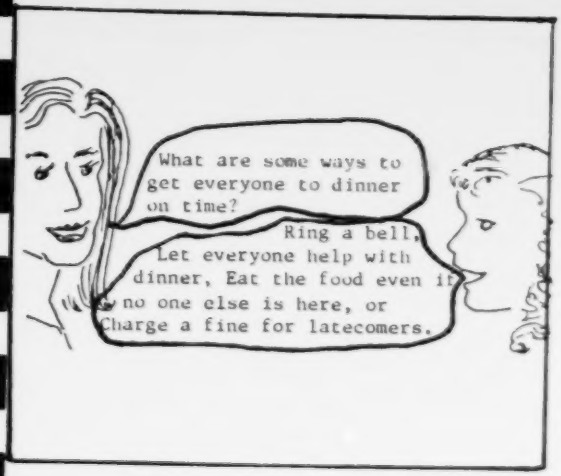
Remind your child to give you clear directions. Afterward, give your child some feedback. Which directions were helpful? Which directions needed to be more clear?

Try switching roles, so your child can understand how it feels to be guided by someone else.

At other times ask your child to guide you through other activities, like a walk indoors; eating a meal; cleaning up the kitchen; or getting dressed to go outside.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

-suggesting solutions to family problems-


What are some ways to get everyone to dinner on time?
Ring a bell, Let everyone help with dinner, Eat the food even if no one else is here, or Charge a fine for latecomers.

What are some solutions?

Leadership Activity

Pick a mealtime - one that is not too hectic and one where the family is together - to discuss a current family problem:

- children arguing over toys
- people not helping with house chores
- too much TV watching
- people coming home late for meals, etc.

Ask your child to suggest some solutions, ones that would be fair for everyone involved.

Try out one of your child's solutions. Talk about how well the solution worked at another mealtime.

Hint: Whenever possible, let your child try the solution even if you don't think it will work.

Things to do

-to make the most of your child's leadership talent-

- Play games such as "Follow the Leader", "Simon Says", or "Mother May I?" and have your child explain the rules and lead the game. Ask others to be the leader and allow your child to act as a member of the group in a non-leadership role.

- Encourage or give opportunity for your child to perform in front of others - skits, dancing, jokes, telling stories.

- Give your child responsibilities like feeding pets, supervising clean up of toys, getting the table ready for supper.

- Praise your child's leadership talents. "You did a good job of watching your little sister outside." "Thank you for making sure everyone knew where to put their coats."

- Model desirable leadership behavior yourself like being reliable and keeping promises. Enforce your rules at home and obey them yourself.

- Encourage your child to be more sensitive to the feelings of others. "How do you think Mary felt when she tripped and everyone laughed?" Let your child know it's okay to express feeling.

- Encourage your child to think of solutions to everyday problems. "How can we make the stairs safe?"

- Help your child to look ahead to the results of his or her actions. "What could happen if you play in the garbage dump?"

Places to go

-to spark your child's interest in leadership-

- Let your child plan a picnic, outing to the park, or a birthday party. Help him or her to think about what will need to be done by asking questions like, "What do you need?", "How many people are you thinking about having?", "What will the people be doing?"

- Allow your child to participate in group activities in the community like recreational activities through the park district or community center, puppet shows at the library, children's programs at church, etc.

- Go to places where your child can meet people who have leadership roles like at church, the police department, the fire department, etc.

- Attend school concerts and talk with your child about the role of the band conductor or the choir director.

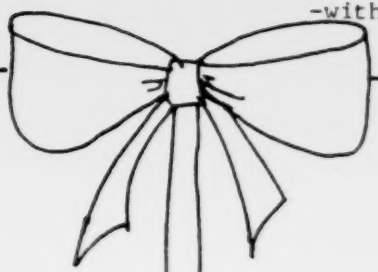
Questions to ask

-that focus on leadership talent-

- How could you include everyone in that game?
- What will happen if you do or don't follow this rule? What would happen if no one followed rules?
- Can you think of some solutions to this problem?
- How will your actions make others feel?
- Which people are leaders at school? At church?

Gifts to give

-with leadership talent in mind-



- Performing props (like a microphone, a baton, conductors wand or pom-poms) and old clothes, sunglasses, hats, shoes, gloves.

- Notebook (for drawing pictures, writing stories, or whatever the child chooses to do with it)

- Books that deal with feelings, are about famous leaders, or books of riddles or finger plays which your child can teach to other children.

- Calendar or datebook in which your child can write birthdays and special occasions.

- Boxes or containers in which your child can organize his or her own things.

- Puppets (homemade from socks or paper bags or bought at garage sales). Your child can act out roles of various people or express feelings through the puppets.

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Art Talent Activities for the Home

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ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S ART TALENT

What to Expect

Having art talent means your child is interested in and appreciates art. It also means your child can produce art. You may see this talent in your child in different ways. Maybe your child has a "good eye" for color or design. You may notice this in his or her drawings or in the way he or she puts together clothes, jewelry or flowers in a vase. Your child usually notices and enjoys things that look interesting. It might be a painting, a sculpture, a building, something in nature or unusual jewelry, clothes, or hair.

Maybe your child spends a lot of time doing art work - painting, drawing, cutting, working with clay. Your child's art work probably looks better than other children's. It's more interesting, has more detail, seems more polished and has more unusual ideas.

Your child may put a lot of his or herself into art work. Perhaps your child really thinks through his or her ideas beforehand and then talks about the art work afterward. She or he will tell you what's good about it and what could be better. These are some ways your child shares his or her talent in art.

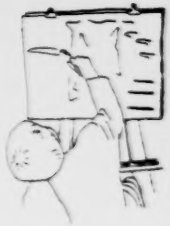
What to Do

You can help develop this talent in many ways. You do so when you pay attention to your child's art work, comment on how it looks and then display it proudly. You do so when you give your child different art materials to use - paints, pencils, chalk, clay, crayons. You help when you do art with your child - drawing, painting, or modeling with clay together. You help when you let your child be messy and creative.

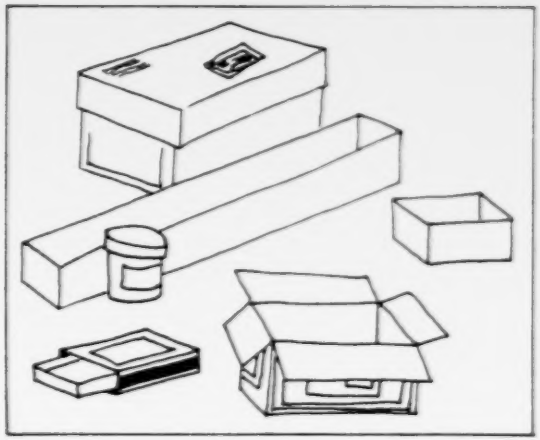
What Does it Mean?

By doing these things, you show your child that you value and respect his or her talent. Continue to encourage your child's art talent. This special gift will give your child a unique way to express him or herself. It will also allow your child to see beauty and art in our everyday world.

BOX BUILDERS
-making things out of boxes-



Art
Activity



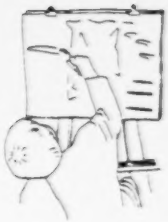
How could you design a garage with a door that opens and closes?

Empty boxes provide a child with endless building possibilities. Give your child as many different kinds of boxes as you have. They may range in size from tiny match boxes to large appliance boxes. Let your child use markers, crayons, paints, or paper scraps and paste to decorate these boxes. The results, with a little imagination, can be houses, towers, cities, cars, garages, beds, spaceships, etc.

Hint: Suggest details to your child to make the objects more realistic, such as drawing bricks, using one box as a chimney or cutting out a window.

STICKS AND STONES
-painting natural objects-

Art
Activity



Tell me about the rock you painted.

This painting activity makes cleanup easy, because it's done outside!

Help your child find some pieces of scrap wood or rocks. Ask your child to paint the object and, when finished, ask him or her to name the work.

Encourage your child to use imagination. Several small rocks might be painted to resemble animals; the piece of wood could be used to make a house; or any kind of abstract designs could be painted on the rocks or wood.

FROSTY CREATIONS
-making things out of snow-

What else could you add to your fort?

Art
Activity

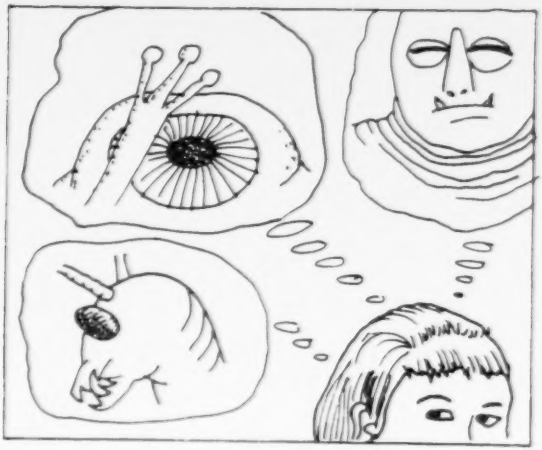
Let nature provide your child with art materials. On a snowy day, take your child outside and show him or her how to use the snow creatively. Use questions to inspire more than the usual snowmen and snow forts. Like:

- *How could we make our snowman look more real?*
- *How would a snow dog look?*
- *Can you build a snow fort for a tiny soldier?*
- *Can you draw a picture of a monster in the snow?*

Providing scrap materials (old buttons, bottle caps, wood scraps, etc.) will also help your child create exciting snow works.

Hint: In summertime try this activity with sand

MONSTER LOOKS
-drawing what's described-



Imagine this monster.

Art
Activity

You'll need crayons and paper for this activity. Tell your child, *I'm going to tell you about an imaginary monster. While I talk about him, you draw a picture of what he looks like. Now listen carefully!*

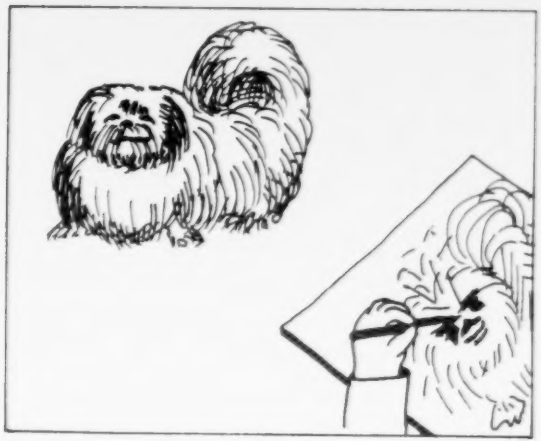
Describe a monster feature by feature using imaginitive words like ugly or crooked to define each part. Following is a "sample monster", but feel free to make up your own!

This monster has a wild-looking head---a soft body---scary eyes---wrinkled ears---slithery tongue---funny nose---ugly arms and fingers---and dancing legs.

Be sure to give your child time to work on each part.

INSPIRED IMAGES
-drawing from a live model-

Art
Activity



Does Fluffy have her eyes open or closed right now?

Use a live subject to inspire your child's drawing. Talk about the different parts of the family dog, cat, bird, gerbil, or fish, and, if possible, let your child touch the animal. Encourage your child to use words to describe the animal, such as fluffy, chubby, wiggly, sleek, etc. Then ask your child to draw a picture of the animal, using markers or crayons. Guide your child in drawing the animal just the way it looks at the time whether it is sleeping, running, eating, or whatever.

Hint: If your family does not have a pet, recruit a neighbor's cat or dog or use a stuffed animal.

THE PERSONAL TOUCH
-making greeting cards-

Happy Holidays!

Art
Activity

The next time someone you know is having a birthday, ask your child to make the birthday card. Provide some paper, folded to resemble a greeting card. Ask your child to make the design on the front, using markers, crayons, or paints. Print an appropriate message inside, or help your child to print it.

You might help your child figure out how to make a reproducible set of cards, like Christmas cards. You could use potato prints, carbon paper, or tracing paper to make duplicates.

Hint: Your child can make holiday cards, invitations or thank you notes.

Things to do

-to make the most of your child's art talent-

- Tell your child specifically what you like about his or her art work - the colors you like, how the overall design looks, the kind of lines used. (Avoid asking your child what it is, instead ask him or her to describe it to you.)
- Talk to your child's teacher about putting on an art exhibit at school or have one at home.
- Look at and talk about patterns and designs in fabrics, on clothes, and in wall paper.
- Sit with your child and color, draw, paint, work with clay, build with blocks, make collages etc.
- Put up your child's art work so that others can see it - not just on the refrigerator door but also in the living room or family room. Remember to change it often.
- Start a collection of your child's best art work or let your child collect it.
- Instead of commercial coloring books, help your child draw or design his or her own coloring book.
- Talk about cartoons and comics in the newspaper. How are the artists styles different?
- Help your child learn to use the words that artists use like illustrations, texture, design, easel, strokes, color shades etc.
- Talk about illustrations in books such as: Where the Wild Things Are, Whistle for Willie, Harold and the Purple Cow, and Beatrice Potter books.
- Set aside a special place or box for your child to keep a ready supply of art materials like tape, crayons, paper, fabric scraps, glue, etc.
- Allow your child plenty of time to mess around with art stuff.

Places to go

-to help your child's art talent grow-

- Visit children's art displays in shopping malls or schools.
- Go to the library to check out art books or art work. (Libraries often loan art prints for a small fee.)
- Visit an art exhibit or museum.
- Visit an art supply store just to see all the tools and supplies an artist uses.
- Go on nature hikes to point out colors, shapes and textures.
- Ask a local artist if you and your child can visit his or her studio.

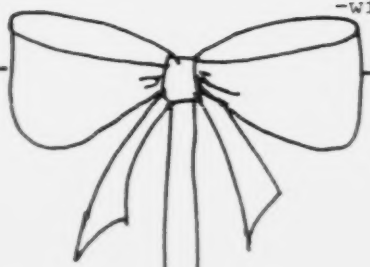
Questions to ask

-that focus on art talent-

- What shapes do you see in the art work?
- What colors do you think the artist used?
- How does that painting make you feel?
- Can you tell me about your picture?
- Where did you see art work today?
- What do you like or dislike about this art? Why?
- How do you think the artist felt when he or she made this?
- How does it look, smell or feel?

Gifts to give

-with art talent in mind-



- Books about artists or any kind of art - photography, painting, sculpture, folk art, jewelry making, pottery weaving
- Inexpensive camera or a roll of film that your child could use in your camera
- Colored chalk for drawing on the sidewalk
- Art supplies like finger paints, scissors, tape, glue, ruler, clay, playdoh, water colors, crayons, markers
- How to art books
- Enrollment in a children's art class
- All kinds and sizes of paper - construction paper, cardboard, paper scraps from a printing company or copy shop, computer paper, rolls of butcher paper, posterboard, etc.

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Music Talent Activities for the Home

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ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S MUSIC TALENT

What to Expect

Having music talent means that your child has a good feel for and understanding of music. It also means that your child has skills to produce music in some way. Following are some ways that you might see this talent in your child.

Maybe your child picks up on the mood or feeling of music. Whenever there's music playing, your child is dancing, singing, clapping, humming or listening very closely. Maybe your child has a good "ear for music". She or he can pick out tunes or rhythms and then repeat them.

Your child may really like to perform music - singing or playing an instrument. He or she may even make up original music. Your child will tell you what he or she likes and doesn't like and tell you the reasons why. These are some ways your child shows his or her talent in music.

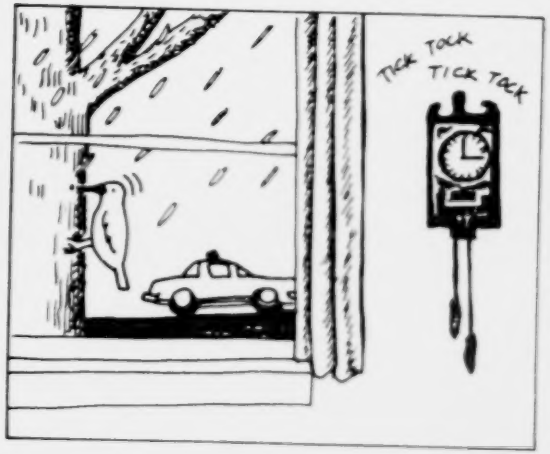
What to Do

You can help develop your child's talent in a variety of ways. You do this when you sing together, and play different music for your child - popular music, jazz, blues, folk, classical. You help when you ask your child to listen to different things in music. Sometimes you might ask your child to listen for the melody, sometimes the rhythm, sometimes the drums, sometimes the piano part. You help when you give your child a chance to hear and even use different musical instruments. You help when you encourage your child to "feel" the music by dancing, clapping, or making up words for the music.

What Does it Mean?

In all these ways you show your child that music is important. By doing these things and by using the music activities, you'll help your child's talent to grow. This talent in music will give your child a chance to express and enjoy him or herself.

QUIET SOUNDS
-listening to quiet sounds-



What are all the quiet sounds you can hear?

Hint: Careful listening is an important part of musical talent.

Music Activity

One day, when you're alone in your home with your child, turn off the TV and radio, and ask your child to listen for "quiet" sounds:

- clock ticking
- water dripping
- refrigerator motor running
- heating or air-conditioning sounds
- washer or dryer sounds
- outside sounds heard inside like the wind, rain, thunder, birds chirping, dogs barking, cars, trucks, sirens.

After you and your child identify each sound, ask him/her to imitate the same sound either by voice or by using household objects to tap, squeak, etc.

Encourage your child to make up a *song* which reminds them of one of the quiet sounds, for instance, a *song* which sounds like a refrigerator motor.

SLEEPYTIME SONGS
-singing stories or nursery rhymes-

What's another way you could sing it?

Music
Activity

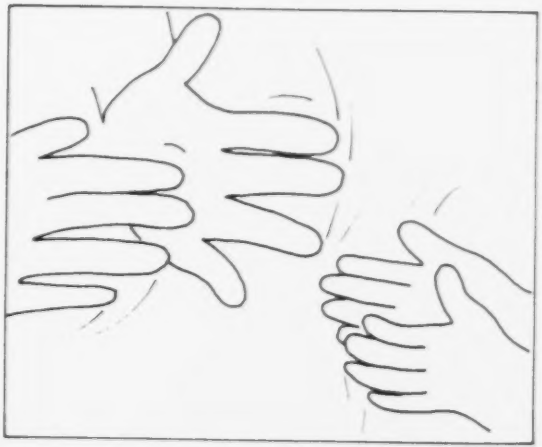
Here's something to do at bedtime. Sing, instead of read, some of the old, traditional nursery rhymes: like Jack and Jill; London Bridge; Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star; and Four and Twenty Blackbirds.

Begin by singing the first two or three words, then stop and encourage your child to continue the song. When she or he gets to the end, ask your child to make up a new melody. Be sure to applaud the new version!

Try singing bedtime stories too, instead of reading them.

Hint: Don't worry about how well you sing. Just make up a tune and enjoy yourself.

NAME THAT TUNE
-clapping rhythms to a song-



What song do you think this is?

Music
Activity

On a long car trip, when someone else is driving, clap out a familiar song. Ask your child to guess the song. If this is too hard, clap and sing "la-la's" for the words. Praise your child for naming the tune!

Then see if he or she can clap out a song for you to guess.

PLAYING ALONG
-playing a homemade instrument-

Music
Activity

Can you make up a song?

When you're busy in the kitchen, give your child a homemade instrument, turn a song on the radio, and ask him/her to play the instrument in time with the music playing.

Here are some ideas for "instruments":

- two blocks or pencils that can be tapped together
- an empty coffee can with a plastic lid that can be used for a drum
- shakers, such as an unopened box of macaroni, or a plastic container and lid with rice or dried beans inside.

After a while turn off the radio, and ask your child to create his or her own song , using the same instrument.

MOVIN' TO THE MUSIC
-being in tune to the rhythm and mood of a song-

How does the music make you feel like moving?

Music
Activity

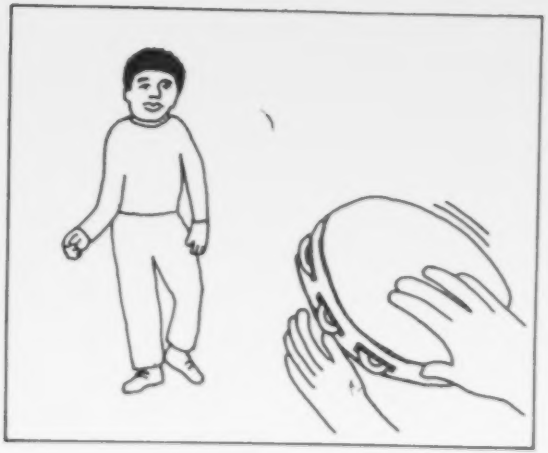
When going on a long car trip, have your child take along two small stuffed animals. Turn the car radio on and tell your child to make the animals "dance" to the song that's playing. The animals might move slow or fast or with long, graceful glides or lots of little jumps, etc.

After awhile, switch to a different radio station so that you hear a different kind of music. Ask your child to make the animals dance to this new song, praising him or her for moving the animals to the tempo.

Another idea is to turn off the radio and very slowly sing a familiar song together. As you are singing, have your child move his or her hand up or down with each note to show whether the music went higher or lower.

MOVIN' TO THE BEAT
-dancing to rhythm-

Music
Activity



What does the music tell your feet to do?

Ask your child to dance while you beat out a rhythm (using two sticks, a tamborine, or a drum). Encourage your child to move his/her feet to that rhythm. When you beat fast, your child's feet should move fast; if you slow down, his/her feet should slow down.

Then try varying the volume. If you play softly your child should move lightly. Loud playing should result in bolder, more exaggerated steps.

Hint: You don't need "real" musical instruments for this activity. An oatmeal box or plastic container can be used for a drum. Anything that rattles can be used for a tamborine.

Things to do

-to make the most of your child's music talent-

- Play music on the radio, T.V., and stereo. Play your child's favorite songs and also play a variety of music: jazz, country, rock, and classical. Check the T.V. guide for concerts and musical shows.

- Talk to your child's teacher (or music teacher) about what your child is doing and could be doing with music.

- Ask your child to sing songs which he or she has learned at school or heard on children's T.V. programs. Learn these songs and sing with your child.

- Let your child make his or her own music instruments at home (blowing through a comb with paper on it, lids for cymbals, drums from pots or cans, shakers from cans with lids and loose objects inside, string instrument using rubber bands over boxes, etc.)

Places to go

-to spark your child's interest in music-

- Public library: for tapes, records, and books on music
- Church: help your child learn to sing the songs during services and encourage him or her to take part in music programs.
- Concerts: schools and shopping centers sometimes have music programs, especially during the holiday season.
- Parades: held for special times such as homecomings, Fourth of July, and Christmas usually include marching bands.

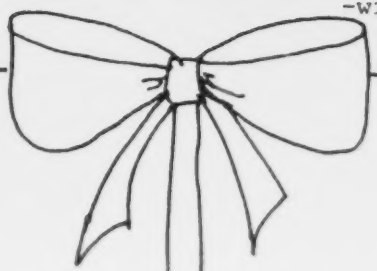
Questions to ask

-that focus on music talent-

- How does that song make you feel?
- Who sings that song?
- Can you recognize any instruments in that song?
- Can you sing that song?
- Do you like that song?
- What song would you like to hear?
- Is the music fast or slow? Soft or loud?
- Can you dance to this music?
- Can you clap your hands with this music?

Gifts to give

-with music talent in mind-



- Musical instruments such as a tonette, mouthharp, xylophone, drum, tamborine, shakers, flute, harmonica, or guitar

- Records and tapes that can be used for listening enjoyment, for moving to, for learning new songs, and for hearing instrument sounds

- Radio

- Musical props like a toy microphone or a conductor's wand

- Tape recorder for recording and listening to different sounds, original songs sung or played by your child or the neighborhood kids' rhythm band

- Books about music, instruments, musicians, bands, conductors, etc.

- Music boxes

- Music lessons of any kind your child is interested in (these could be given by a professional or just informally by a friend or by you)

BOHST
Bringing Out Head Start Talents

Reading Talent Activities for the Home

ABOUT THESE ACTIVITIES

These activities were created for the BOHST (Bringing Out Head Start Talents) Project at the University of Illinois. They focus on one of nine talent areas which are being used with children in the Head Start Program your child attends.

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ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S READING TALENT

What to Expect

Reading talent includes the following four skills - listening, speaking, writing and reading. You may have noticed that your child is a careful listener. She or he hears a story once and can tell you details about that story. Your child may have a large vocabulary, using words that seem complicated. Your child might spend a lot of time printing letters and words and might ask you how to make letters or how to spell words. Your child may also be able to read simple books or words on the cereal box, signs on the street, titles on books or menus in restaurants. All these examples indicate that your child has a special interest and ability in reading.

What to Do

You can help your child's reading talent in several ways. You help when you answer questions about what a word says or means or how it's spelled. You help when you ask your child questions about what happened in school, on a field trip or at the movies. You help when you an your child read or tell stories together. You help when you point out words at the grocery store, in the newspaper, on cans of food, or on street signs.

What Does it Mean?

These examples and the activity ideas in this manual give your child valuable practice with his or her talent in reading. By encouraging your child's special interest and ability in reading you will help your child become a successful communicator and an able reader.

SHOPPING FOR LETTERS

Looking for letters on items in the grocery store-

Can you find something that begins with each letter on your list?

Reading Activity

Next time you go to the grocery store, give your child an alphabet shopping list. This can be an imaginary list or a real one. (For the real list, simply write the letters of the alphabet on a piece of paper.)

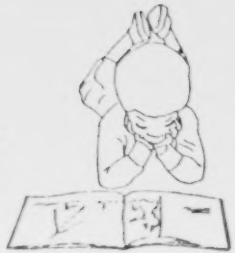
As you walk down the aisles tell your child to find something that begins with each letter on the list. Once an item is found, that letter can be crossed off.

When you're waiting in the check out line, go through the alphabet shopping list together. How many items can your child remember?

Hint: Don't worry about the letters your child can't find.

FAMOUS PERSON INTERVIEWS
-playacting someone famous-

Can I ask you some questions?



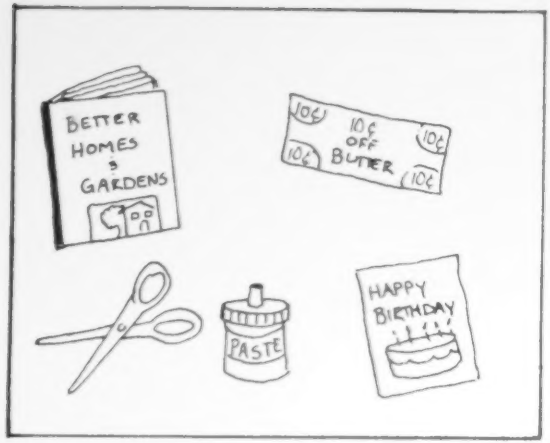
Reading Activity

When you have time to do something special, do some playacting with your child. Tell your child to pretend to be someone famous. Some possibilities are - a Sesame Street character, Santa Claus, the President, an astronaut, a famous actor (Webster, Bill Cosby, Annie), or a famous musician (Michael Jackson, Boy George). Pretend to be a reporter and interview the famous person.

If your child is a famous actor, some sample questions might be: *How does it feel to be a famous actor?...How did you learn to act?...What movie role or TV part do you like yourself best in?...What else do you like to do besides act?*

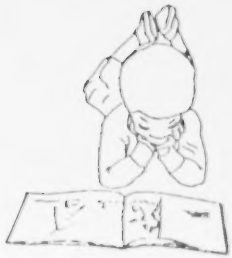
Exchange roles. You become someone famous and let your child interview you.

WORD SEARCH
-looking for words in print-



Look for all the words that begin with the letter B.

Reading Activity

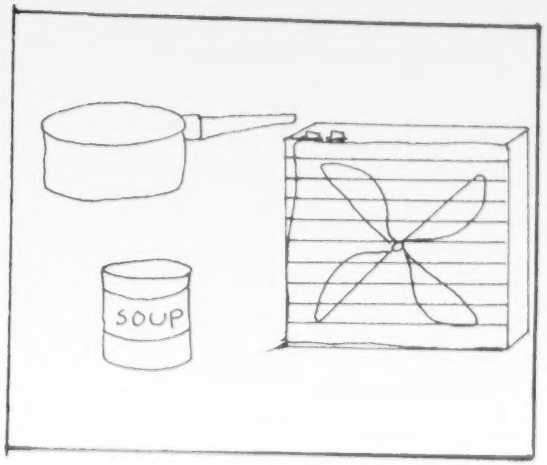


On a rainy day give your child an interesting project to do. Gather some old magazines, newspapers, greeting cards or coupons, some paper, scissors, and paste. Ask your child to find all the words that begin with a certain letter. Then tell your child to cut those words out and paste them onto a sheet of paper.

When several words are on the paper, go over them together. Circle all those words your child can read.

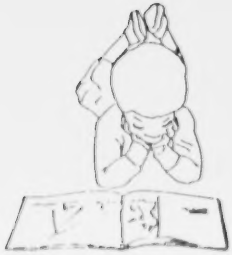
Hint: To help your child find the letter you choose, print it at the top of the page.

DEAD BREAD AND BLUE STEW
-finding words that rhyme-



What are some more words that rhyme?

Reading
Activity



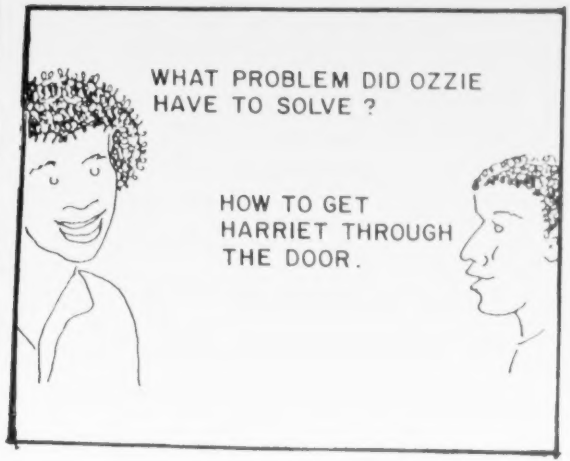
Play a rhyming game with your child while you're working in the kitchen. Pick a word and ask your child to say as many words as she or he can that rhyme with that word Include nonsense words. (Bed-head, said, shed, med, fled, etc).

Then change the game a little bit. See if your child can complete a simple rhyme that you've started. For example, you might say, *I'm baking a pie,*_____. Ask your child to finish it with something that rhymes. He or she might say:

-I'm baking a pie, and that's no lie.
-I'm baking a pie, but I don't know why.

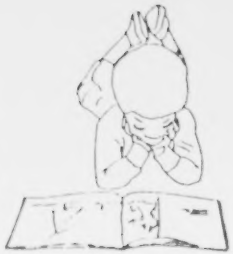
Take turns. Let your child start a rhyme and you complete it.

THE CRITIC
-reviewing movies and TV shows-



How did he solve the problem?

Reading Activity



Help your child become a more selective movie and TV watcher. After watching a movie or TV program with your child, talk about the show and ask questions like:

- *Who were the characters? Should this person have acted the way he or she did? What else could he or she have done?*
- *How did it end? What was another way it could have ended?*
- *What did you like most about the show? Do you think other people would like this show?*

After your child has given his or her views, discuss your own opinions of the show. Where are you in agreement? disagreement?

Hint: By talking about shows or books, your child can learn that all stories have a plot. Usually there is a problem to be solved by the characters.

TELL ME A STORY

-tell a story about the day's experiences-

Tell me a story about something that happened today.

Reading Activity

At the end of the day when you're putting your child to bed ask him or her to tell you a story about something that happened during the day. Say to your child, *Think about the day you had today. Pick out one thing that happened and tell me a story about it. Your story can be a true one or a make-believe one.*

If your child has difficulty recalling the day, then be more specific. *Tell me a story about something you saw outdoors today.* or *Tell me about your doctor's visit today.*

Hint: You can help your child develop the story by asking questions like, "Who's in your story?" "How do they feel about each other?" "What's going to happen to them?"

Things to do

-to make the most of your child's reading talent-

- Set aside a special time to read to your child every day. Talk with your child about the book and pictures
- Set an example by taking the time to enjoy reading yourself.
- Play rhyming games (ex. What rhymes with "hat"?)
- Play sound games (ex. What word begins with the same sound as "ball"?)
- Help your child keep a list or file of words he/she can read.
- Start a beginning sounds notebook with your child. Help your child find pictures in old magazines, or words which begin with each alphabet letter. Cut and paste these on pages labeled with each letter.
- Put labels on things around the house (ex. door, chair, lamp) so your child can learn the word that goes with the object.
- Write down sentences or stories that your child dictates about his or her art work or something which happened.
- Talk to your child often and give him or her time to talk to you.
- Watch Sesame Street on television with your child and make the show a regular part of your child's day.
- While traveling, play the Alphabet game. Look for letters in order from A to Z on signs or cars, etc.

Places to go

-to spark your child's interest in reading-

- Children's story hour at your public library
- Make regular visits to the library to check out books, records and tapes.
- Take your child to garage sales to find used books.
- Book stores
- Take a walk or ride and help your child read the signs along the way.
- Puppet shows or plays
- Walk through a grocery store and let your child read labels of products.

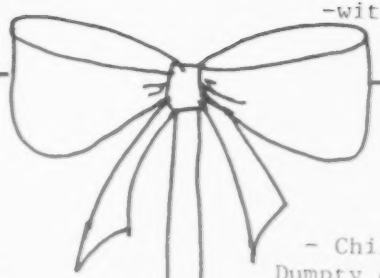
Questions to ask

-that focus on reading talent-

- Read the title of a book and ask your child to guess what the book is about.
- What's another good name or title for this story?
- Stop reading in the middle of a story and ask your child to guess what will happen next.
- Can you tell me what is happening from the pictures?
- Can you tell me this story in your own words? or can you draw what happened?
- If your child is good at following simple directions (ex. "Get a cup."), then give him or her harder, more complex directions (ex. "Go to the kitchen, get a cup out of the cupboard, fill it with milk, and bring it here.").
- What letter does this word start with?
- Tell me about what you did at school today. at the park. at your friend's house.
- What are all the words you can think of that begin with the letter "b"? "f"? "r"? etc.
- How many words can you name that rhyme with "cap"?
- Who is this story about?

Gifts to give

-with reading talent in mind-



- Alphabet cards with pictures
- Index cards for writing words for the word file
- A blank notebook to use for pasting pictures of words or the alphabet
- Simple reading games, like Picture Lotto, Concentration, etc.
- Books which will hold your child's interest (picture dictionary, Dr. Seuss, Richard Scarry, collections of stories and poems, nursery rhymes)
- Books containing word-finds or simple crossword puzzles
- Children's magazines like Humpty Dumpty or Sesame Street Magazine
- Blank tapes to use for recording stories that you child makes up
- Puppets

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ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S MATH TALENT

What to Expect

Your child's math talent means she or he has a special interest and ability with number ideas and number problems. You may see your child's math talent in a variety of ways. Your child likes to count things - buttons in a box, numbers on a clock, pennies in a purse. Your child often measures or weighs objects. She or he might tell you that the bag of flour is heavier than the bag of salt or that you are shorter than Grandpa. Your child may compare objects in other ways too. She or he might say that you have the most pretzels on your plate or might arrange your measuring cups from tallest to shortest.

Maybe your child likes to add or subtract items. She or he may show you that two peanuts and three peanuts make five peanuts. Your child may be interested in telling time or understanding money value. All of these examples indicate your child's special talent in math.

What to Do

You can help your child's math talent in many ways. You help when you ask your child to count out spoons and forks for dinner and when you show your child how to tell time or count up pennies and nickles in a bank. You help when you ask your child to split a cookie in half or to divide a banana evenly for three people.

What Does it Mean?

These examples and the activity ideas in this manual show your child how math skills can be used many times in a day. By encouraging your child's math talent you help him or her become a better problem solver. Your child will be able to tackle problems in a logical and step-by-step manner.

A FAMILY SURVEY
-survey family likes and dislikes-

Which do you prefer?

Math
Activity

Start a special project with your child. Help your child set up a survey to find out about family likes or dislikes. Ask your child what information she/he would like to find out. Maybe your child would like to know whether family members prefer:

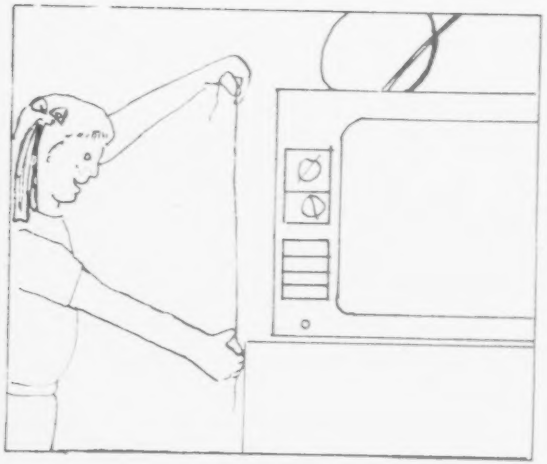
summer or winter
basketball or football
McDonald's or Burger King

Help your child write the words on a sheet of paper and let him/her survey family members one by one.

Ask your child to guess what people will say. *Do you think more will prefer chocolate or strawberry ice cream.*

MEASURE UP

-measuring objects around the house with a piece of string-



Find something that is the same size as the string.

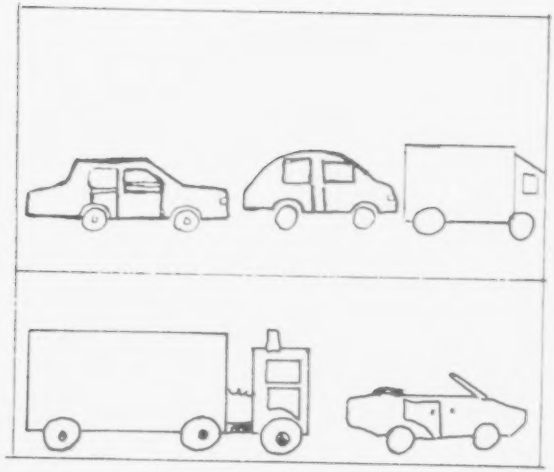
Math
Activity

When your child needs something interesting to do, give him/her a measurement project. Get a piece of string, ribbon or yarn. Tell your child to find all the things that are the same size as the string. *What are some things that are longer than the string?...Shorter?...What's something that is two strings long?...Can you find something that is half a string long?*

Anything in the house can be measured, including people.

Hint: If you have a tape measure, ruler or yardstick, have your child work with it.

TAKING INVENTORY
-counting different types of vehicles-



How many trucks can you count?

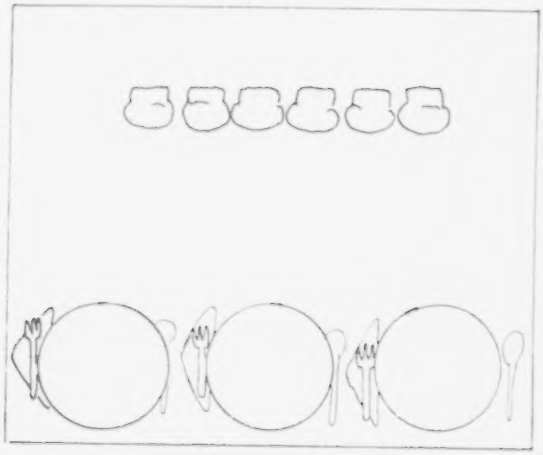
Math
Activity

While you are driving in the car or waiting in a parking lot, ask your child to count different types of vehicles. Say to your child, *See how many white cars you can find* or *See how many taxicabs you can count.*

Then ask your child to make predictions. For example, *By the time we get home, do you think you'll see more black cars or more red cars?* or *Do you think you'll see more buses or more trucks while waiting here?*

Make a prediction along with your child. Who predicted correctly?

FAIR SHARES
-dividing food into equal parts-



How many muffins should each person get?

Math
Activity

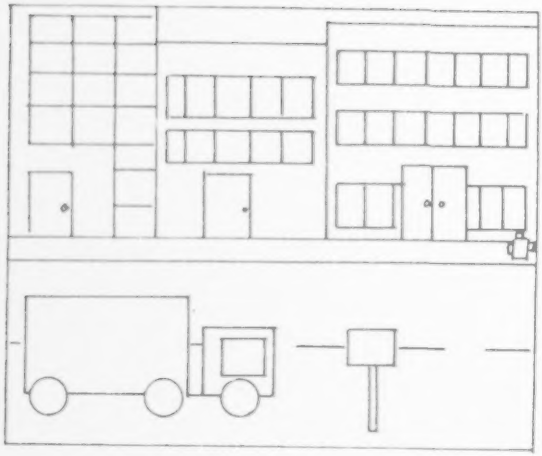
When you're preparing meals, let your child figure out how to divide food equally. Some examples of mealtime number problems are:

We have 4 glasses of milk and 4 people eating. How many glasses of milk do we each get?
or *We have 6 sandwiches and 3 people eating.*
or *We have 8 apples and 4 people eating.*
or *We have 10 pieces of chicken and 5 people eating.*

Have the child guess an answer and then divide up the food to see if the answer is right.

Hint: Division can be learned through the "one for you and one for me" approach.

SHAPE SEARCH
-looking for shapes outdoors-



Tell me all the square shapes you see.

Hint: Try playing the shape search inside the house too.

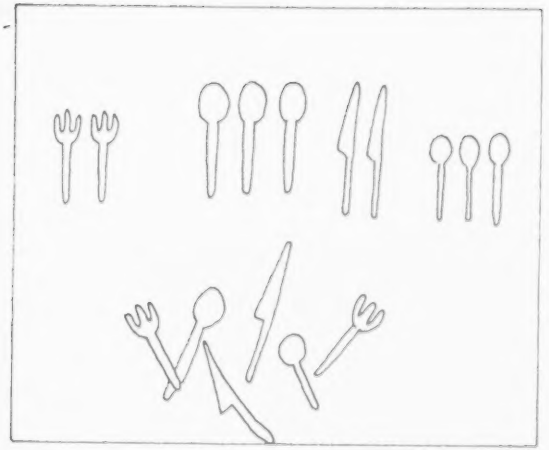
Math
Activity

Go on a shape search with your child outdoors. Ask your child to point out all the square shapes she/he sees. Remind your child to do some careful looking. Some square shaped things will be very large, others will be very small. See how many your child can find.

Another time look for circle shapes, triangle shapes, rectangle shapes, six-sided shapes ( ), or ovals.

To make the shape search more challenging, ask your child to find groups or combinations of shapes. For example, see if your child can find five rectangles in a row, a circle inside of another circle, or two triangles on top of each other.

SENSIBLE SORTING
-sorting household items-



What's another way you could sort this silverware?

Math
Activity

Give your child a collection of one of the following groups of items:

- utensils
- cans or boxes of food
- storage containers
- buttons
- jewelry
- shoes
- toys

Ask your child to organize or sort the collection into piles that go together. For example, your child may sort buttons by size, shape, color, number of holes, whether or not they like them.

When your child is finished, ask, *Why did you put these pieces here and these pieces over here?* Any way your child decided to group the items is fine as long as he or she had a reason for how things were divided. Next ask your child to try sorting the same collection of things in a different way. Encourage your child to sort them in as many different ways as possible.

Things to do

-to make the most of your child's math talent-

- Help your child make a Math Box that he/she might use to entertain himself/herself at special times. Put in things like a tape measure, ruler, measuring cups and spoons, toy telephone and old telephone book, plastic numbers or numbers written on index cards, and things to count (beans, buttons, spools, pop bottle caps, play money or coins).
- Gather objects that can be used to classify by kind, size, shape or use.
- Have your child put things in order, like ordering assorted jars from shortest to tallest or ordering sticks from longest to shortest.
- Using cards with numbers like playing cards or just an index card with a number on it, ask your child to match the numbers with that many bottle caps or buttons.
- Make Sesame Street a regular part of your child's day.
- Teach your child about time (minutes, hours, days, weeks, etc.), about shapes, values of coins, names of numbers and how many they stand for.
- Teach your child songs or finger plays that use numbers (Ten Little Indians, Five Little Monkeys). You can often find songs or finger plays in books from the children's section in the library.
- Gather odd objects outside and inside and try first to guess which is heaviest, then weigh them to find out.

Places to go

-to spark you child's interest in math talent-

- When shopping, point out the prices of items and compare the sizes of clothes and talk about which costs more and which size is bigger, and you might allow your child to pay for small purchases himself or herself.

- When you take a walk, count houses, cars, trees, telephone posts, or whatever.

- Take your child to the library to get books about shapes, numbers, sizes, simple addition or subtraction, etc.

- When you go on a picnic or plan a party, have your child help decide how much of everything you need - food, plates, silverware, glasses, napkins, etc.

- Point out numbers wherever you go - on elevators, on apartment doors, on street signs, on billboards, on food labels, on houses, on license plates, etc.

- Visit a computer store and ask them to give you and your child a demonstration.

- Visit people who work with numbers in these jobs - a cash register checker, an accountant, a banker

25
22
20
28
32
36
40
100 mm
1.0
1.1
1.25
1.4
1.6
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0
2.5
2.2
2.0
1.8
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890
1.0 mm
1.5 mm
2.0 mm
A5

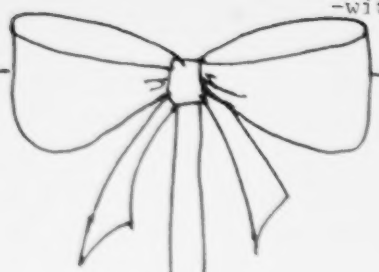
Questions to ask

-that focus on math talent-

- Can you find the numeral 3 anywhere on this page?
- How many more do you need to make ___?
- If you eat two of those, how many will be left?
- Can you look at the calendar and find the date?
- Do we have enough for everybody to have one?
- Who has the most? Who has the least?
- Which is the tallest (longest? heaviest?)? Which is the shortest (lightest? skinniest?)?
- What are all the ways we could measure this?
- Can you divide this in half (two equal parts)? Thirds (three equal parts)? Fourths (four equal parts)?

Gifts to give

-with math talent in mind-



- Simple games that teach counting and numbers where the child has to count the spaces to move (ex. Candy Land, Fantasy Forrest, Hi Ho Cherry O, and Chutes and Ladders)

- Other game ideas are: Don't Spill the Beans, dominoes or playing cards like Fish, Crazy Eights and Rummy.

- Beads of different colors, shapes and sizes for stringing, counting, sorting, simple addition and subtraction

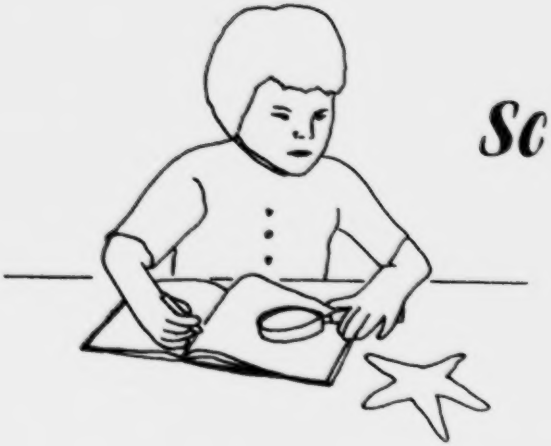
- Counting picture books and dot-to-dot books

- Tape measure

- Play money and a cash register

8 of 9

BOHST
Bringing Out Head Start Talents



Science Talent Activities for the Home

S9

ABOUT THESE ACTIVITIES

These activities were created for the BOHST (Bringing Out Head Start Talents) Project at the University of Illinois. They focus on one of nine talent areas which are being used with children in the Head Start Program your child attends.

Chances are that if you have been given these activities, your child has been identified in the science talent area. As you know, this is very good news. Using information from your child's teacher and from the interview with you, the Head Start staff along with a BOHST trainer have selected your child as having potential to excel in the science area. While your child may have other talents also, science seems to be an area of exceptional strength right now.

These activities resemble the ones you received in detective, inventor and judge thinking in that they are informal and are designed to fit into your busy schedule. However, these activities are different in that they focus on one particular talent area and have only been sent to parents whose children have been identified in this area.

You can do most of these activities during your normal routine--for instance when you are bathing your child, putting her to bed, going somewhere with him, or sitting around the dinner table. Each activity may be used over and over again, as long as it is enjoyable for you and your child. You many change any of the activities to make them more useful, interesting, or suited to your child.

Having a talent is just a beginning. With help from parents and teachers, a talent can grow into a set of skills, and a child may develop into a creative and productive adult. The preschool years are critical to a child's development, and activities such as these can help your child become a productive and talented adult.

ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S SCIENCE TALENT

What to Expect

Your child's science talent means that she/he has a sharp interest and understanding of the world. You've probably seen this talent in many ways. Maybe your child spends a lot of time observing and exploring things in nature: rocks, seeds, animals, shells, insects, water, and ice. Your child seems especially curious about the world. She/he asks a lot of questions about how things work and why things happen.

Maybe your child is very organized about finding things out. She/he might collect and sort objects, make up simple experiments and make charts. Maybe your child searches for more information when she/he's interested in something. For instance, if your child is interested in butterflies, she/he wants to read books about butterflies, look at pictures of butterflies, watch programs on butterflies and watch butterflies outdoors.

What to Do

You help your child's science talent in ways that you may not realize. You help when you encourage your child to explore and find out information. You show your encouragement by asking questions and maybe providing materials for your child to use: jars, strainer, string, flashlight, funnels, rulers, mirrors, eyedroppers. You help when you encourage your child to notice details or events (like a trail left by ants or a rainbow after a storm).

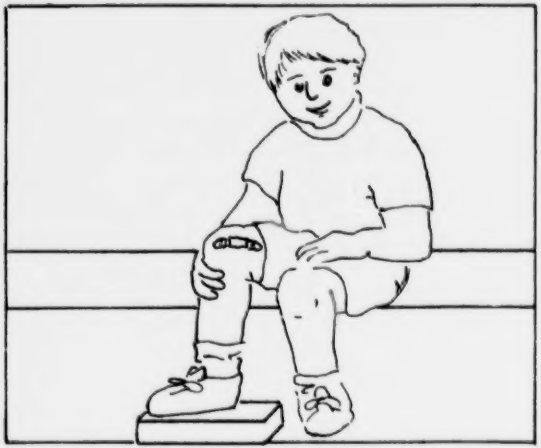
You help when you show a respect and appreciation for nature. You might point out the delicacy of a spider's web or the splendid colors in fall.

You also help when you treat your child's curiosity and explorations seriously. By listening to your child's "discoveries" and by helping your child find answers to questions, you show that you value his/her science ability.

What Does it Mean?

Continue to do these things and use the activities in the manual. Both will help your child's science talent grow along with him/her. This science ability - noticing things asking questions and gathering information - will help your child find answers to things both in an outside the world of science.

OUCH!
-watching a cut heal-



How does it look today?

Science Activity

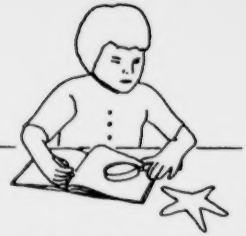
Next time your child gets a cut or scrape, say *Let's watch the new skin grow until it covers up your cut.* Wash it out gently, ask you child to look carefully at it, then cover with a band-aid. Several hours later, let your child peek at it and talk about any changes.

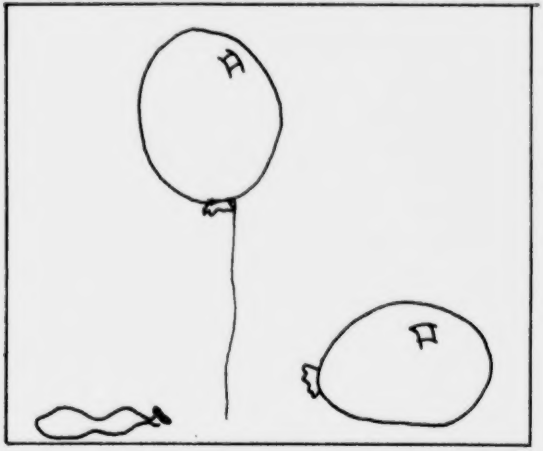
Help your child mark the day on the calendar. On each following day, remind your child to look at his/her cut carefully, and to describe how it looks. Using the calendar, ask your child to count the days it takes the cut to look "good as new."

Hint: Instead of emphasizing how the body is injured, emphasize how wonderful it is that the body can heal itself.

WATER AND AIR
-experimenting with balloons-

Science Activity





Which balloon is heavier?

You will need three balloons for this activity. Fill one balloon with water and another with air (by blowing it up). The third balloon should be left empty.

Let your child pick up and hold each balloon. Ask him or her to tell you what each balloon has in it. If your child says that the inflated balloon has nothing in it, ask your child to compare the blown-up balloon with the one that is not. *Why do they look different?* (Answer, *Because the blown-up balloon has air in it.*)

Ask your child to:

- *put the air balloon and water balloon into water. What happens?*
- *go outside and throw both balloons into the air. What happens?*

Hint: Help your child to see that water is heavier than air, so the water balloon feels heavier, sinks in water, and comes down faster and harder.

A WEIGHTY MATTER
-using a scale to compare weights-

How much do you weigh now?

Science Activity

Take out the bathroom scale and help your child write down his or her weight. Then give help with recording the weight of others, like mother, father, sister, brother, dog or cat. Ask your child to compare the numbers, picking out the heaviest and the lightest.

Suggest simple experiments that your child can do while standing on the scale. For example, what happens to a person's weight when he or she:

- touches the wall
- is touched by someone else
- holds a small stuffed animal
- holds several heavy books
- wears first a swimsuit, then a snowsuit with boots, hat, scarf, and mittens
- stands on one foot.

SPROUTING SEEDS
-growing fruit seeds-

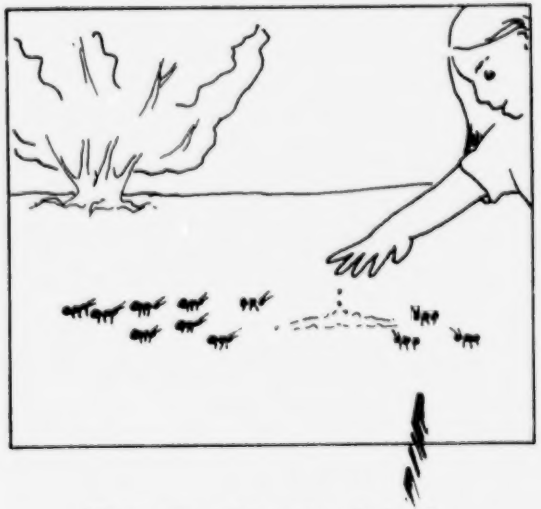
What can you do with the seeds?

Slice apart an orange, grapefruit, or other citrus fruit. Point out to your child the different parts of the fruit, like the skin, pulp, and seeds.

Let your child plant the seeds in a flower pot or cup. (Plant the seeds close to the top, and keep the soil barely moist, not wet.) Set the pot in a warm, sunny window and wait patiently for the seeds to sprout (probably in 2-4 weeks).

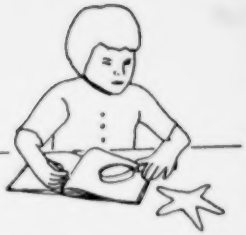
If the seeds do not sprout, or sprout and die, ask your child to think of possible reasons- too much or too little water, too cold, not enough light or sun, too much sun, poor seeds, etc.

THE ANTS GO MARCHING
-watching ants-



What are the ants doing?

Science Activity



On a warm day, go outside with your child and search for ants. Once you find them, encourage your child to bend down with you to watch them. Ask your child simple questions such as:

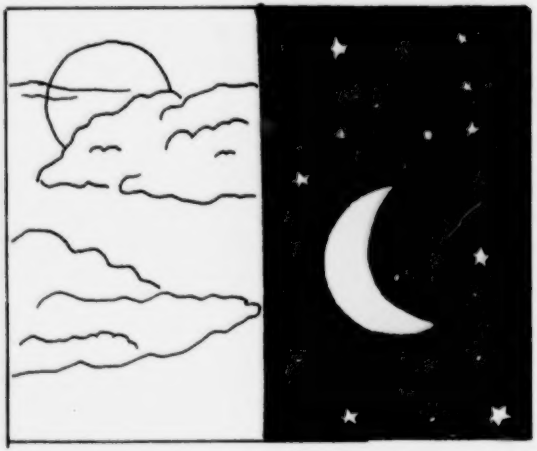
- *Where are the ants going?*
- *What are they doing?*

Next, give you child a small amount of kool-aid or sugar water and tell him or her to spill it near the ants. Do the same thing with regular water. Ask, *What do they do?* Then try putting a stick, rock, or piece of wood in an ant's path. Ask your child to describe what happens.

Later, ask your child to record what she/he observed by drawing a picture and dictating to you an explanation for the picture.

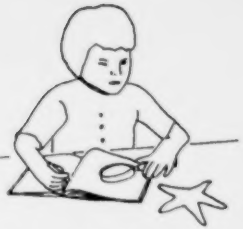
Hint: Encourage your child to take a close look at other kinds of insects.

READING THE SKY
-looking at clouds and stars-



Are there more stars out tonight or last night?

Science Activity



On a day with white, fluffy clouds in the sky, ask your child to join you in looking for pictures in the clouds. On a starry night, see if she/he can find pictures in the stars.

Ask your child to look at the sky several days in a row.

- *Is the color of the sky the same each time?*
- *Do the clouds or stars look the same each time?*

Have your child record his or her observations by drawing pictures and/or dictating descriptions for you to write.

Hint: Date your child's records and then go back and discuss how the clouds changed.

Things to do

-to make the most of your child's science talent-

- Help your child keep a collection box where he/she stores "good stuff" that they find and want to keep.
- Make a bird feeder. You might use an empty milk carton or plastic gallon jug.
- Put up an outdoor thermometer that can be seen from the inside. Have your child check the temperature outside each day in order to help him or her decide what clothes to wear.
- Listen to your child's questions and help him or her discover the answers.
- Try doing simple experiments with your child like mixing food colorings in water or growing seeds.
- Check your library for books with science stories or simple experiments. These could be picture books or higher level science books that may have interesting pictures or information you can read to your child.
- Whenever you have a chance, share with your child simple knowledge which we as adults take for granted. (ex. How things grow, How to tell when the seasons change, How ice is made etc.)
- Encourage your child to watch weather reports, or nature shows like Wild Kingdom on television.

Places to go

-to make the most of your child's science talent-

- Go on a nature hike with your child to a nearby park or the woods. Look closely at leaves, trees, bugs, footprints, shadows, and plants. Listen for sounds and be aware of smells too.
- Take your child grocery shopping and talk about where different foods come from.
- Go to a zoo, farm, museum, animal shelter, train station, airport, pet show, etc.
- When you go to the doctor or dentist, help your child think of questions to ask.
- Take a walk outside after dark - look at stars, catch fireflies, watch the bugs swarming around a light.
- Visit a plant store that has seeds of all kinds so that your child can see the seeds and the types of plants they produce.
- Take a walk outside after a rain to see how things look different when they are wet.

Questions to ask

-that focus on science talent-

- Why is that happening? (ex. water rippling in a pool, a flag blowing etc.)
- How are these alike, different or the same?
- What happens if...
- What do you see, feel, hear, taste or smell?

Gifts to give

-with science talent in mind-

- Magnifying glass
- Clear toys where mechanisms can be seen operating
- Things to measure with - a ruler, a set of measuring cups or spoons, a rain gauge, a thermometer, a scale
- Old junk machines that can be taken apart like a clock, motor or camera
- Flashlight for searching out mysteries in the dark
- Stopwatch
- Boxes and jars for collecting things like bugs, leaves, "good junk", rocks, seeds, etc.

BOHST

Bringing Out Head Start Talents

Psychomotor Talent Activities for the Home

ABOUT THESE ACTIVITIES

These activities were created for the BOHST (Bringing Out Head Start Talents) Project at the University of Illinois. They focus on one of nine talent areas which are being used with children in the Head Start Program your child attends.

Chances are that if you have been given these activities, your child has been identified in the psychomotor talent area. As you know, this is very good news. Using information from your child's teacher and from the interview with you, the Head Start staff along with a BOHST trainer have selected your child as having potential to excel in the psychomotor area. While your child may have other talents also, psychomotor seems to be an area of exceptional strength right now.

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Having a talent is just a beginning. With help from parents and teachers, a talent can grow into a set of skills, and a child may develop into a creative and productive adult. The preschool years are critical to a child's development, and activities such as these can help your child become a productive and talented adult.

ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S PSYCHOMOTOR TALENT

What to Expect

Psychomotor talent refers to having the ability to use large muscle (motor) and small muscle (motor) skills. This talent can be seen in many ways. Your child might work well with his or her hands - sewing, drawing, braiding, cutting or be unusually graceful, quick or flexible in the way she or he moves. Maybe your child runs, jumps, throws, climbs, catches - better than other children or is especially strong for his or her age. He or she might enjoy active movement - playing sports, climbing trees, doing gymnastics. These examples describe a child with psychomotor talent.

What to Do

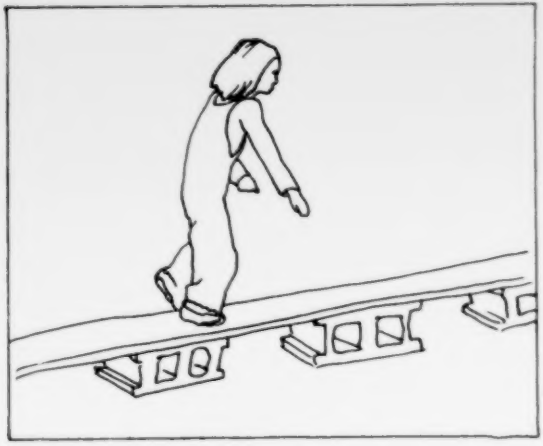
You can help your child's psychomotor talent in many ways. You do so when you give your child interesting projects to do with his or her hands like painting furniture, braiding hair, cutting out coupons, or rolling out cookie dough. You also help when you give your child a chance to play sports or to watch others in sports - playing basketball or baseball, swimming, or skating. You help when you show your child how to do certain movements like skipping, doing a sommersault or headstand, sawing a block of wood, riding a bicycle. You help when you ask your child to move in creative ways - "Move like popcorn popping", or "Move like a butterfly coming out of its cocoon."

What Does it Mean?

These examples and the activities in this manual give your child many ways to develop psychomotor talent. Keep encouraging this talent because it will benefit your child throughout his or her life. Psychomotor talent is used in many jobs. It will give your child a recreational or creative outlet. And it will be useful in many day-to-day projects requiring strength and coordination. When you help your child feel good about his or her physcial abilities, you contribute to a healthy self-concept.

HIGH WIRE ACT
-walking along a series of balance beams-

Psychomotor
Activity



Can you balance walking forward on the beam?

In a safe spot outdoors, set up a series of "balance beams" using items that are long, narrow and sturdy (wooden boards, bricks, blocks).

Ask your child to balance walking forward on the beam. Then change the directions. Ask your child to try,

-walking backwards.
-walking side-to-side.
-turning around in the middle of the beam.
-jumping up and landing on the beam.
-walking with eyes closed.

If bricks and boards are not available, use the concrete curbs in a parking lot (as long as you are careful to watch out for cars) or simply have your child balance on the lines in a sidewalk.

Hint: You can make a balance beam inside by taping a long piece of masking tape to the floor. Your child can practice walking on this line.

AND ONE AND TWO...
-keeping rhythm with different body parts-

Psychomotor
Activity

Move your fingers and toes while we count out eight beats.

See if your child can coordinate body movements in a rhythmic way. While riding in the car, count out or sing eight even beats:

And one and two and three and four and five and six and seven and eight.

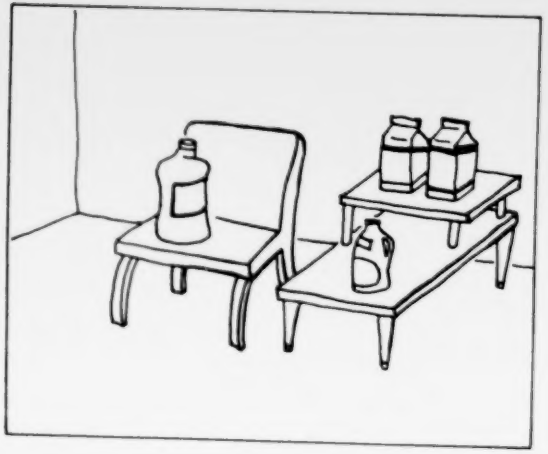
Ask your child to move two body parts while you count together, like head and shoulders, knees and eyebrows, or elbows and toes, or both feet.

Now see if your child can move one body part doubletime (both on the "and" and on the "number") and one body part singletime (just on the beat or "number").

Hint: Try letting the child start by tapping a foot doubletime and then adding in a slower hand clap.

PITCH ONE IN
-Aiming and throwing at targets-

Psychomotor
Activity



Can you hit the milk carton on the left?

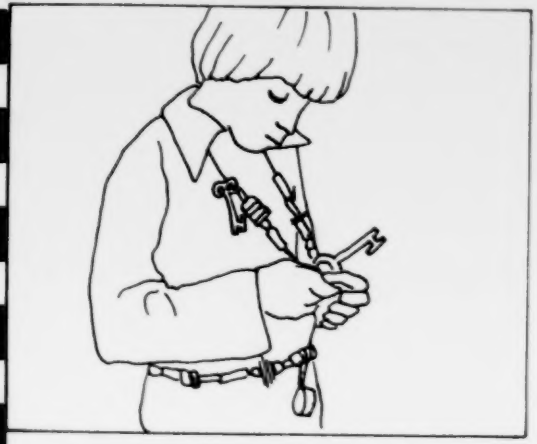
Hint: Try this activity outside. Set up the targets on a picnic table, bench or rock.

When it's raining outside and your child needs something active to do, set up some target practice. Collect five or ten plastic bottles (soap, lotion, shampoo, milk cartons, or plastic jugs). Set them up on a table, chair, box or bench in a safe area of the house. Give your child something soft to throw with like a sponge, rolled up sock, or nerf ball. How many throws does it take your child to knock down all the targets?

You can make the target range more challenging by having your child stand further back or by making the targets heavier (use full bottles or put sand, pebbles or water in the bottom of them).

For a special treat, tape a secret message to the bottom of one of the bottles for your child to find. Like, *"Come get a hug."* or *"Come hear a funny joke."*

DECORATIVE WEAR
-Stringing household items-



You made an interesting string of things for your necklace!

Psychomotor Activity

While you're busy at home, give your child some string or ribbon and a variety of objects that have holes large enough to string. Some examples are:

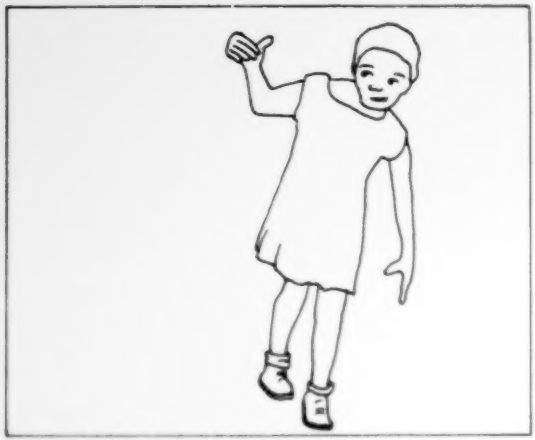
-pasta or noodle shells	-cereal (cheerios,etc.)
-old keys	-metal nuts or washers
-key rings	-beads
-large buttons	-spools of thread
-measuring spoons	-kitchen utensils

Say to your child, *"Use these things to make something unusual to wear."* If your child needs some ideas, suggest a necklace, bracelet, belt, or headband. Let your child do all the threading and tie the knot at the end if possible.

Hint: Two ways to make this activity easier:
wrap one end of the thread with masking tape
or paint some nail polish on it to make it stiff.

MOVING SCULPTURES
-moving creatively in a new role-

Psychomotor
Activity



Move like a tightrope walker.

Play this game where you have some room to move. Ask your child to imagine that his or her body is made of clay. You are a sculptor and can mold your child's body into anything.

Pretend to "sculpt" your child into a new person.

- -skater
- -gymnast
- -dancer
- -boxer
- -basketball player
- -tight rope walker

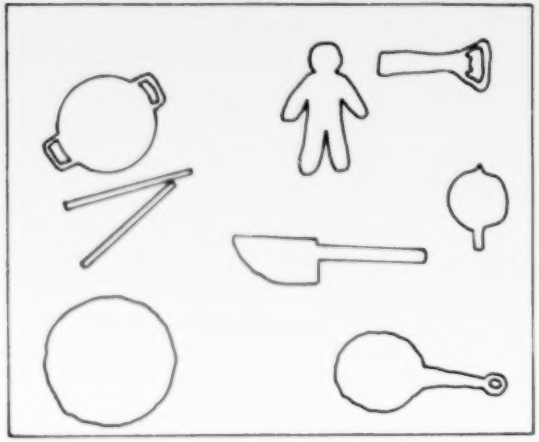
Explain to your child who he or she has become. Then tell your child that when you push the button on his or her nose the sculpture will come to life. Say to your child, *"Move as your new body would move."*

Next time try some animal sculptures and movements. "Sculpt" a snake, a horse, frog, elephant, etc.

MYSTERY SHAPES

-tracing a variety of household objects-

Psychomotor Activity



Trace around some shapes and I'll guess what they are.

When you're working in the kitchen give your child a tracing activity. Give your child some paper, a pencil and some objects to trace around - kitchen utensils, cookie cutters, cups, bowls, plates, small pots and pans, etc. Tell your child to trace around them carefully. When she/he's finished, you guess what was traced.

Now tell your child to try to fool you by combining two or three objects. Can you guess what they were?

Hint: As your child gets more practice at tracing, you can try more detailed or complex objects.

Things to do

-to make the most of your child's psychomotor talent-

To develop big muscle movements:

- Provide active things for your child to do outdoors - tie a rope around a tree for climbing, help your child draw a hopscotch board on the pavement, organize races with other children using different movements like galloping, skipping, jumping, etc.
- Include your child in your exercise program or start one together. (A child's body can't do all that an adult's body can. Don't push your child to continue when tired.)
- Give your child large boxes to play in.
- Encourage your child to try doing different combinations of movements like jumping with both feet, turning around, and then running to a tree. Give him or her specific praise.
- Encourage your child to show others how to dance, do tumbling or acrobatics, or pantomime.
- Watch sports events like the Olympics on T.V. and talk about what the athletes are doing.
- Provide opportunities for your child to share and take turns in game situations like "Mother May I?", "Red Light, Green Light", "Musical chairs", Horseshoes, or Jump Rope.

To develop small, fine movements:

- Allow your child to use tools (with supervision) to take apart old appliances or clocks.
- Give your child matching nuts and bolts or plastic containers with screw-on lids so your child can practice screwing them on and off. Make bean bags and targets for use inside or outdoors.
- Provide materials for drawing, cutting (scissors with rounded points), weaving, hole punching, sewing, making playdough.

Places to go

-to spark your child's interest in psychomotor talent-

- To a pool or lake for swimming or to watch swim meets (both high school and college swim meets are usually free)
- To the park to play on the equipment, or to a large open area that's good for running and tumbling
- To a gym
- To the roller rink
- Sports games like football, softball, basketball, soccer, tennis
- To high school or college gymnastics meets
- Enroll in a park district, boys or girl's club, or YMCA programs if possible (there are usually many different kinds of physical activities)
- To a dance recital

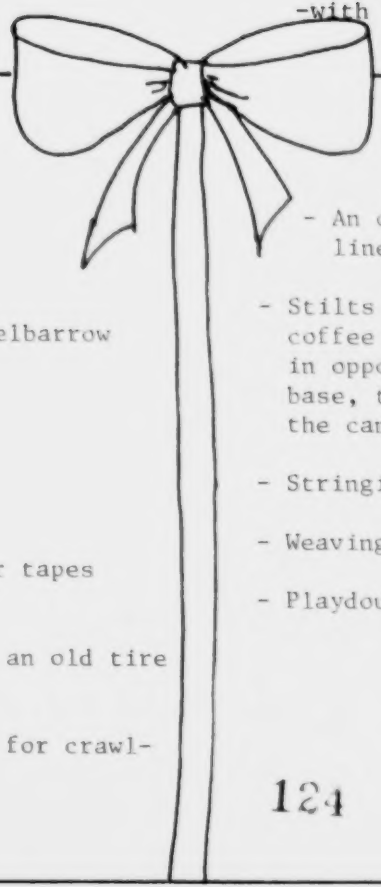
Questions to ask

-that focus on psychomotor talent-

- How far can you jump? How fast can you run?
- Does your back bend like your knee does?
- Can you show me how to do that trick?
- Can you move in a different way?
- Can you do a combination of three different movements in a row? For example, jump, turn around, then do a somersault.
- Can you move to the music?
- What can you make with this playdough?

Gifts to give

-with psychomotor talent in mind-



- Balls of different sizes
- Jump rope
- Tricycle, sled, wagon, or wheelbarrow
- Bean bags
- Hula hoop
- Ice skates or roller skates
- Children's exercise records or tapes (those by Ella Jenkinson)
- Swing (one made by hanging up an old tire is fine)
- Fabric tunnel or large barrel for crawling through
- An old mattress to use as a "trampoline"
- Stilts (these can be made from two coffee cans by punching two holes in in opposite sides of each can near the base, then threading a rope through the cans to use as handles)
- Stringing beads
- Weaving materials
- Playdough